

2000

Factors that generate effective teams

Alberto V. Lenz Cesar

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses>

Recommended Citation

Lenz Cesar, Alberto V., "Factors that generate effective teams" (2000). Thesis. Rochester Institute of Technology. Accessed from

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Thesis/Dissertation Collections at RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.

FACTORS THAT GENERATE EFFECTIVE TEAMS

Thesis presented to the
Faculty of the School of Hospitality and Service Management
at the
Rochester Institute of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

Prepared by
Alberto V. Lenz Cesar

August 2000

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Department of Hospitality and Service Management
Graduate Studies

M.S. Service Management
Presentation of Thesis/Project Findings

Name: Alberto Cesar Date: 08/14/00 SS# _____

Title of Research: FACTORS THAT GENERATE EFFECTIVE TEAMS

Specific Recommendations: (use other side if necessary)

Thesis Committee: (1) Dr. James Jacobs (Chairperson)

(2) Dr. Edward Kelly

OR (3) Dr. Richard Marecki

Faculty Advisor: _____

Number of Credits Approved: 2

August 14, 2000 _____
Date Committee Chairperson's Signature

Aug 14, 2000 _____
Date Committee Signature

Note: This form will not be signed by the Department Chairperson until all corrections, as suggested in the specific recommendations (above) are completed.

cc. Department Student Record File – Original
Student

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Department of Hospitality and Service Management
Graduate Studies

M.S. Service Management
Statement Granting or Denying Permission to Reproduce Thesis/Graduate Project

The Author of a thesis or project should complete one of the following statements and include this statement as the page following the title page.

Title of Thesis/project: FACTORS THAT GENERATE EFFECTIVE TEAMS

I, Alberto L. Cesar, hereby (grant, ~~deny~~) permission to the Wallace Memorial Library of R.I.T., to reproduce the document titled above in whole or part.
Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

OR

I, _____, prefer to be contacted each time a request for reproduction is made. I can be reached at the following address:

Date 08/14/2000

Signature _____

ABSTRACT

The journey to prosper competitively in the millennium will demand teamwork. The use of a team-based structure in organizations is no longer just a surplus tool to enhance service quality in the operation. In today's developed economies, the use of effective teams has proven to be essential for helping businesses to have continued prosperity and success on a long-term basis. Further, building teams has shown means for organizations to differentiate from competition, once copying human capabilities is not easy as copying technologies advancements. Therefore, in an environment of constant change, organizations must have perseverance and courage to stay on course with the evolution of teams.

Implementing a team is not so difficult, but making the team effective is a real challenge. When teams do not achieve effectiveness it may be a waste of time, but when teams become effective they might generate outcomes that were though intangible before.

The objective of this project is to assist the reader in appraising the team building concepts in order to bring more effectiveness to the overall organization. The study includes examination of relevant literature from books and articles collected from abstracts, periodicals, and journals related to team building. This study includes as well as the results of interviews with business personnel in Ithaca and Rochester, NY concerning what factors generate effective teams. The results collected from these interviews were transcript and analyzed against the primary research and the differences and matching findings between these researches were discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is in recognition of team Metanoia who provided me with hands on personal experience in learning about team building and its implied challenges and consequential benefits. Team Metanoia consisted entirely of students enrolled in the Executive Leader Program in the Service Management Master degree at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). The diversity of this team made a positive contribution to my personal growth and learning. We had the challenge of solving different problems that we experienced by using simple tasks, such as games in the big red barn up and heated discussions in the classroom. Overall, we achieved growth as a team by being connected to each other and by dealing with problems with more patience, respect and trust in our colleagues. This experience instilled in me the passion to pursue researching the team building concept and to create this project.



The picture above shows from left to right: Thelma Roman, John Kralles, Thomas J. Smyth, Alberto L. Cesar, Beverly Chesnut Foster, Richard Willians, Howard Dixon, Kathee Muldermans, Gayle Brosseau, and Tom Treat.

Team Metanoia was not created by itself. We had dedication and professionalism from a very supportive staff. So, I would like to show my gratitude for the following staff members from the School of Hospitality & Service Management at RIT that perpetuated the growth of this team: Dr. Francis Domoy, Dr. Richard Marecki, Dr. Jim Jacobs, Dr. Joseph (Mick) La Lopa, Dr. Edward M. Kelly, and Anne Zachmeyer.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to organizations in Ithaca and Rochester, NY that provided me with some perceptive ideas concerning team-building application in the business industry. They encouraged my pursuit to broaden my horizons.

My gratefulness is directed also to my family, Ruth, Pat and Gui, whom understood my absence when I could not join several times because I had to work on this project instead. I would also like to express thanks for all the times that I had to ask them to reduce the volume of appliances.

I have to admit that the high writing quality of this project is not only due to my own skills, but also due to the writing tutoring of Elizabeth Barber and Dr. Jim Jacobs. Thanks again Elizabeth and Jim for your revision of the grammar and spelling.

Lastly, I have to extend my appreciation to Dr. Edward M. Kelly, Dr. Jim Jacobs and the late Dr. Richard Marecki who were my dedicated and insightful advisors. Dr. Kelly helped in directing the format of the project, Dr. Jim Jacobs helped in giving new directions without telling them, and Dr. Marecki was so dedicated and passionate with his job that I still feel his support even after his passing. They inspired me with confidence and the encouragement to engage in developing my ideas into a high, outstanding, quality project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE: PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY	1
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	3
THE PROBLEM STATEMENT	4
THE PURPOSE	5
MAJOR QUESTIONS	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
THE SIGNIFICANCE	7
HYPOTHESIS	7
IDEOLOGICAL AND PROCEDURAL ASSUMPTIONS	8
PROJECT FORMAT	9
DEFINITION OF TERMS	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	11
INTRODUCTION	11
I. Building teams	11
I.1. Team selection	14

I.2. Team roles clarity	23
I.3. Proposed team tasks	24
I.4. Commitment to teams	29
I.5. Communication	32
I.6. Virtual teams	34
II. Developing teams	36
II.1. Stages of team development	36
II.2. Characteristics of effective teams	39
II.3. Characteristics of ineffective teams	41
III. Managing teams	43
III.1. Maintenance approach	43
III.1.A. Training	46
III.1.B. Establishment of performance measurement	48
III.1.C. Programs for recognition of effective teams	52
III.2. Organization and individual goals	56
III.3. Motivation	59
III.4. Managing conflicts	62
IV. Benefits of using teams	67
V. Risks of using teams	68
VI. Why teams fail?	69
VII. Learning from others	71
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	74
HISTORY AND BACKGROUND	74

THE ROLL OUT PLAN	74
CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS	76
INTERVIEWS	76
FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS	76
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	83
BIBLIOGRAPHY	86
APPENDIX A: CASE INTERVIEW DEMOGRAPHICS	92
APPENDIX B: LETTER CONFIRMING THE INTERVIEW	93
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE QUESTIONNAIRE	94

CHAPTER ONE

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Environmental change today requires organizations possess the ability to innovate and adapt their products and services at a quick pace. Meeting their customers' demands at all times by providing the highest level of service possible is their goal. Constant change is a permanent part of contemporary business, and survival will depend on how companies create their future by maximizing their present performance in order to constantly satisfy customers' demands. For that reason, leaders should be in charge of creating and maintaining an organizational structure that is able to handle constant changes in customers' needs and wants. This organizational structure may address how the organization deals with their internal customers, who might reflect the organization's pattern of quality, by having a direct relationship with the organization's external customers.

Today's global economy is becoming too specialized and moving too fast for commercial organizations to maintain a hierarchical structure. Forward-looking institutions are considering unique ways of organizing to foster responsiveness, efficiency, innovation, and learning. Despite the difficulty of implementation, cross-functional teams can make commercial organizations more responsive and more efficient (Cross, Spring 1997, 43).

The team-based structure has proven to be an approach that is able to withstand quick changes, and at the same time, provide equilibrium between the internal customer's quality of life

and the external customer's service expectations. Additionally, considering that customers frequently rate the quality of a product or service provided by comparing their expectations of what they hoped to receive with what they actually did receive, organizations always have the challenge of matching or even surpassing customers' expectations. Once more, teams may be able to reflect directly on the customer's view about the organization's service or the product's quality.

The actual trend of organizations in searching for increased quality, using fewer resources, downsizing and reducing investments has also required employees to work together and become more efficient. Teamwork has almost infiltrated every nook and cranny within just about every organization. Yet, the truth is that the large majority of teams do not achieve the synergies they could. The synergism of combining individuals together to create ideas and solve problems forms the basis for organizations to implement teams. Teams may exceed what one individual can produce alone. Teams have the potential to tap synergy. Teamwork is like a salad: individually, each ingredient may be tasty and fresh, but they will certainly not add up to a gourmet experience. Put together in the right way, the ingredients enhance one another to produce startling results (Mendzela, Sep 1997, 62).

Furthermore, individuals working as a team might contribute complementary management skills that will enhance the team's performance and facilitate the team's success. However, this process might achieve high rate of success only if team members are in harmony with each other. This harmony is related to team member's synchronization that may be reflected from their personal interests, values and beliefs. Team building is a process involving human feelings, attitudes, actions and mutual commitment by managers and team members to try to work together more effectively (Dyer, 1995, 1).

Organizations should possess the expertise to recognize team opportunities and the audacity to support the development of teams. Progressive organizations should always be thinking about what they could do better tomorrow. As a result, they can expect rewards, both in their profit margins as well as in their organizational culture by proportioning higher levels of satisfaction and performance within their internal customers.

Nurturing the development of teams, however, is not a simple task for an organization used to operating under a traditional structure. The process of moving toward a team-based arrangement requires a careful plan from the beginning in order to gather continuous positive outcomes. Whenever an organization feels ready to transition to a team-based structure, they should have a clear idea about why they are initiating teams, what, if any, changes should be made in the organizational chart, and what might be the potential benefits and risks involved. Once the organization reaches a positive conclusion about these questions, they should initiate a plan to form the teams.

BACKGROUND

A long-term study of the use and effectiveness of employee involvement practices found that teams are more popular in the US workforce and employee involvement is common within organizations. Teams are a potentially powerful way to move power downward in organizations. When asked, the overwhelming majority of companies responded that their employee involvement efforts are successful. In 1996, 81% of them said that their expectations were positive or very positive, while only 3% reported a negative experience. There is every reason to believe that employee involvement will be increasingly popular in the years to come (Lawler, Sep/Oct 1999, pg. 18).

Intuitively, employee teams seem to be a great idea and are certainly a growing trend. According with Joinson (1999), research at the Center for the Study of Work Teams indicates that by 2000, 80% of Fortune 500 organizations will have half of their employees on teams. Informal studies and anecdotal evidence from consultants estimate a failure rate of at least 50% - but effective teams can achieve remarkable results that more than make up for the failures (Joinson, May 1999, pg. 30).

On the other hand, the activity of teams has shown some negative outcomes. One of the more surprising results of a survey on teams conducted by the Catalyst Consulting Group indicated that more than 70% of them are unsuccessful. Ronald Recardo (1999), argues that one of the reasons for this low success rate is the lack of formal assessment to provide baseline data on the organization that can serve as a valuable input into the redesign process.

To remain innovative and competitive, businesses are looking for employees who can work and learn effectively in teams. Organizations are increasingly using teams to improve quality, speed, innovation, and customer satisfaction. According to Kagan (1994), "In a high-technology economy, the norm in the workplace is interaction. Increasingly, the workplace consists of interdependent teams working on complex problems which no individual alone can solve" (Gardner, Sep/Oct 1998, pg. 28).

THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Building teams is not a new word in the business vocabulary. Since the era of industrial revolution, England circa 1750, factories had already created a system by using "teams" to increase more efficiency for the large-scale production. Today, there are a lot of companies that have already implemented teams in their organization and that those teams are delivering strong outcomes. In reality some of those companies had an archaic conception of teams as workgroups

based in individual line production outcomes. Their misconception about empowered teams did not lead to an ability to enhance the overall organization performance by motivating employees to deliver new creative solutions to improve customer service and to boost the organization growth.

Achievement of this new conception to using teams is not an easy task. It may be easy to say that your organization will achieve a high performance team, but once the conception is implemented the results reached could be awfully different. From a theoretical point of view is just a logical input procedure to implement and the outcomes are expected to happen as a follow up consequence. The results achieved could be quite different from expectations. In a lot of circumstances, organizations do not give to the teams a proper importance and time to surpassing stages of growth. Consequently, some teams never achieve high levels of outcomes and they are preserved, when not eliminated, in organizations to keep generating established production line outcomes.

THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to identify factors that may generate high performance teams. In spite of the challenges, this study may assist organizations in evaluating team building concepts by considering their implementation in an effective manner, and therefore bringing more success to the organization as a whole. This study may provide organizational leaders with new concepts in order to create a culturally diverse environment that will continually support team building. Additionally, it will reveal factors that indicate reasons for success or failure in team building.

This study is not measuring a particular team's effectiveness but only attempting to determine the attributes associated with effective teams.

Therefore, the purpose of this project is:

- 1) To identify and analyze the attributes of effective teams.

- 2) Provide new concepts that continually support team building.
- 3) Describe the perceived benefits and risks of teams.
- 4) Reveal factors that indicate reasons for success or failure in team building.
- 5) Describe the characteristics of ineffective teams.
- 6) Outline useful tips for managers to implement or empower teams in their organizations.

MAJOR QUESTIONS

This study may help unveil barriers that might be blocking empowerment of teams. This study may help you to understand, for example,

- 1) Why a certain team is not motivated to work as a team.
- 2) Why a certain team is in conflict most of the time.
- 3) Why organizations should worry about individual moral and self-esteem.
- 4) What organization measurements should be done to evaluate a team's performance.
- 5) What the potential risks involved in sponsoring teams could be.
- 6) What you can do to motivate teams to achieve more positive results.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As organization leaders consider introducing teams as part of their philosophy, they will need to gain personal knowledge on the subject in order to efficiently make such a change in the organization's culture. The team approach requires real change in leaders who recognize that they first must change themselves before they can expect to mentor others. Successful leaders are models who coach, provide support and establish commitment at all levels of the organization.

As a structural component of organizational design, teams will impact the alignment of all systemic processes including selection, communication, training, and the motivation of all the people involved. Transitioning to a team-based organization involves keeping abreast of future

trends and continuously learning new leadership approaches to motivate people to be more effective.

This study includes defining and developing teams as a means to produce higher performance. The study includes reports based on books and articles from abstracts, periodicals and journals related to team building. Most articles were obtained in the ABI-ProQuest through the internet using key words such as: team and effective, ineffective, benefits, risks, commitment, internal conflicts, individual and organization goals, failures, interdependence, and benchmark.

The main sources of the articles collected were: *The CPA Journal*, *Manager Update*, *The Guardian*, *The Atlanta Journal*, *HRMagazine*, *Commercial Lending Review*, *Information Executive*, *CSWT Reports*, *Group & Organization Management*, *Business and Economic Review*, *Accountancy*, and *People Management*.

THE SIGNIFICANCE

The influence of teams within an organization is very powerful as it leads the business toward greater success or profound collapse. Therefore, it is very important to properly evaluate and consider how to implement teams. If, by mistake, an organization takes inappropriate steps implementing teams within their business, productivity could suffer. On the other hand, the use of effective teams within an organization could promote success previously not imaginable.

HYPOTHESIS

It is expected that this study identify factors that generate high performance teams. If the findings of this study demonstrate the anticipated outcomes, this study may indicate directions that could be taken to help organizations make teams more effective. However, if the findings of this study indicate no relationship with the expected outcomes, further research will be required.

IDEOLOGICAL AND PROCEDURAL ASSUMPTIONS

Interviews will be made with staff involved with representative business personnel in Ithaca and Rochester, NY area that fosters teams. In order to reduce bias in interviews, some questions will be asked of the different interviewees.

However, the conclusion of this study may be biased due to the difficulty in measuring team effectiveness, the diversity of peoples orientation with teams, the range of the participant's perceptions and thoughts, the accuracy of the data collected, response rate of receiving the interviews feedback, inadequate sample size, the different stages that an organization might be passing through, the time to conduct the interviews, and by different interpretation the researcher may have from each data.

The researcher disclosed that he might were bias writing this project about building teams, because he had previously experienced working with teams and such experience might had influenced the direction of this study. He had previously experienced working in teams in almost every social meeting, but the main hands on experience occurred when he had worked in a department of strategic planning of a steel company. The team was guided by a professional organization, which took the place of a sponsor and steering committee. The company employees representing different departments formed the team. They met twice a week during a three months. Even considering this bias, the researcher relied largely on the literature and data collected from interviews and not from his experience.

PROJECT FORMAT

This project is basically presented the following five chapters.

- Chapter One provides an overall panorama of the purpose and scope of the study.
- Chapter Two presents ideas about what other authors and researches have published on the subject.
- Chapter Three illustrates the research methodology and demonstrates procedures for collecting and analyzing data.
- Chapter Four reports the findings obtained from the data collected.
- Chapter Five provides the conclusions and fosters recommendations in practical ways about how to implement the findings for this project.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Accountability:

The state of being liable, answerable, and responsible for the effects of your actions and willing to explain or be criticized for them.

Benchmark:

Something that is used as a standard of reference for achievement by which things can be measured or judged.

Commitment:

The hard work and devotion that someone gives to accomplish something or to behave in a particular way.

Conflict:

State of disagreement or argument between people, in which you have two or more opposite feelings about something.

Downsizing:

Process to eliminate layers of management hierarchy resulting in a flatter organizational structure and reduced costs.

Empowered teams:

Providing a group of people more authority and control over their own life or situation.

Interdependence:

Situation in which people or things depend on each other.

Motivation:

The inner state and willingness that induce individuals toward satisfying a need without being forced to do it.

Need:

Gap between a desired state and its actual state. It is a lack of something that is required to fulfill a necessity that is not yet satisfied.

Proactive:

Positioning that has the intention to make things happen by preparing for, intervening, and changing events rather than reacting to them.

Team:

Small group of people with complementary skills who are committed to work together to perform set of goals.

Teamwork:

Cooperative or coordinated effort of a group of people working together as a team or in the interests of a common purpose.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This study will illustrate the phases of building, developing and managing teams from a theoretical point of view as well as compare the theory with the researched results. Additionally, benefits and risks of teams will be analyzed, and the reasons of failure will be explained. Finally, this study will provide insights on potential changes that might have to be performed in order to enhance learning capability.

I. Building teams

Anyone in a leadership position, whether they are appointed or emerge, must build a high performing team around themselves. An effective high performing team has high standards, mutual accountability and a deep commitment to the task and to each other. For teams to succeed, people need to feel that they are playing a part in determining a result. Team leaders must involve the team in determining objectives, structures, methods, and membership. The best approach to teamwork reflects the organization's culture, its people, and the level of trust achieved (Menzela, Apr 1997, pg. 12).

The team approach requires great devotion and assertion from the people involved in the process of building a team. Leaders must recognize that they first must change themselves before they can expect to mentor others. Their pattern in working in teams should be a sample to follow. Michael Regan, president of The Journey Inc. of Raleigh, N.C., says that supervisors need to

change even before team members do. “Supervisors should not do the thinking and problem-solving; their first job is to refuse to solve employees’ problems for them and develop the employees’ ability to think at work” (Joinson, May 1999, pg. 30).

The American style of management is very hierarchical. To achieve the benefits of teams, managers must be more accepting of a participatory style. Managers must be able to articulate and motivate people to an end goal while remaining neutral on the means for attaining that goal (Cross, Spring 1997, pg. 43).

As evidenced in the corporate world, there is a growing belief that the era of reinvention, reengineering, and restructuring demands a new conception of what it means to be a leader. The increasing use of computers in today’s work environment has demanded that people to use their imaginations and their intelligences more. The modern leader must maintain his position by coaching, mentoring and teamwork, instead of commanding and controlling. Teams, usually made up of a handful of employees, don’t look to bosses for control. They make decisions as a group, constantly searching for consensus (Shoop, Jul 1994, pg. 22).

Furthermore, leaders must be proactive. They need to envision their organization’s future, define the mission, adapt the culture, and provide the necessary tools and atmosphere to continually improve processes that support their strategies in conducting team building spirit and proportioning creative learning with the people involved. Successful leaders provide support and establish commitment at all levels of the organization. Leaders may encourage the members of a team to participate in solving problems and creating solutions. Therefore, leaders must create a fear-free climate that supports experimentation in order to allow the people involved the opportunity to learn by implementing the knowledge that they have gained. This employment of

applied experience may foster a clearer understanding of team building as the group becomes part of a team and learns from successes and mistakes.

One of the first steps for an organization procedure, with the implementation of a team building concept, is to create a business plan. This plan should describe how the company intends to achieve its proposed goals and to measure accomplishments. In order to do construct a plan, the organization should first encourage the team members to develop a vision statement that reflects beliefs of the organization. This statement should mirror the perception of the organization about marketplace needs and methods by which an organization can satisfy those needs. The team formed to address such statements might pursue a broader view about the company and its marketplace than a single person in the organization could have done alone.

Second, the team should develop a mission statement that illustrates the company's aims, what goods or services they will offer, what market they will serve, how their employees should be treated and the morals or the company's belief system might be. These outlines seek to guide the work of people within the organization and inform customers about the organization's point of view. The mission statement should be short and concise focusing in tangible targets that the organization is willing to achieve. The statement should be easy and attractive for everyone in the organization, keep in mind the targets, and be committed in achieving it. By remembering such statement, everyone becomes a trigger into a process to achieve the desirable outcomes.

And third, the team should implement corporate objectives that should be the guideposts by which managers would define standards that the organization should accomplish in such areas as profitability, customer service, and employee satisfaction. These guideposts may help employees to improve their self-confidence, support them in coming up with suggestions for solving

problems, encourage them to do their best, and provide tangible standards by which a company can evaluate its organizational performance.

The appropriate team type is one that reflects what the employer, the employees, and the organization as a whole can best support. It is important to seek a good fit with the type of work to be done: the organizational climate, cultural issues, and the readiness of those involved (Mendzela, Sep 1997, pg. 62).

The process of building teams is based on careful attention to many aspects of its development. The implementation of this process may impact the alignment of all the organization's systemic processes. Implementing a team is not so difficult, but making the team effective is a real challenge. When teams do not achieve effectiveness it may be viewed a waste of time, but when teams become effective they might generate a lot of outcomes that may be worth all the efforts.

In order to create a team is required only to follow a few steps beginning with sponsoring the activity of creating a team and ending with defining team tasks. However, the process to make a team effective is much more challenging, because to be efficient requires commitment and connectivity between team members, traits that are beyond the direct control and influence of the organization.

This study will analyze the following basic steps necessary to build teams: team selection, team roles clarity, proposed team tasks, and commitment to teams as a defined purpose.

I.1. Team selection

The first step in creating a team is the selection of team members. The selection should be composed of organization's employees that might be involved directly with the problem or with the potential change. The people selected should have high standards of interpersonal, analytical,

and technical skills that should be evaluated accordingly with the team composition. Team builders should strive for a diversity of people with different personalities, skills and experiences in order to gain a maximum variety of viewpoints. A successful team will have members who are motivated and willing to change, and can improve their attitudes, develop loyalty and trust, communicate clearly, listen carefully, respect differences, allow equal participation and commit to continually learning and improving the team dynamics (Scholtes, Joiner, & Streibel, 1996, pg. 1).

However, just as managers at every level will encounter people who are willing to be involved in team activities, they will also encounter those who will not be involved under any circumstance. The reasons why individuals refuse to join include: 1) outside commitments, 2) fear or embarrassment, 3) an overwhelming workload, 4) not a team player, 5) mistrust of management, 6) fear of failure, 7) fear of losing one's job, 8) an I-do-not-care attitude, 9) conflicts and 10) bad experiences. Leaders can formulate logical ways to help nonbelievers become comfortable with the idea of team involvement. Leaders need to exercise real, sincere leadership skills. Leaders should emphasize the associate's strength while viewing their weaknesses as development opportunities rather than shortcomings (Jaycox, March 1996, pg. 45).

Diversity is becoming more common in senior management teams - and diversity breeds success. A mix of genders, ethnic backgrounds, and ages in senior management teams corresponds to superior corporate performance. Organizations that include senior managers under the age of 40 show a greater success pattern than those with exclusively older top executives. Despite predictable obstacles and clashes due to the diversity of people working together, it is possible to create smart teams. Getting the generations to work together - not just as a group of people, but as a team committed to reaching its goal - is today's competitive advantage. By

inspiring people to contribute their best efforts and reinforcing their personal value to the company, organizations create smart teams that achieve their missions (Farren, Jul 1999, pg. 14).

One of the most effective ways to select the best-qualified associates is to conduct behavioral-based interviews. Behavioral interviewing is based on the premise that past behavior is a good indicator of future behavior. Managers looking for associates who can have a positive impact on their organization should hire people who have displayed positive results and characteristics in previous jobs or other endeavors. There are some common characteristics that are valuable in any associate. According to Lyles, below are characteristics that managers should look for in prospective associates, along with samples of behavioral interview questions that can help to determine if the applicants have the desired characteristics, and types of indicators to look for in their responses.

- 1) Ability to Solve Problems. All organizations encounter problems, whether it's dealing with associates or handling irate customers. The ability to think through problems quickly and identify possible solutions can make the difference between keeping a valued client or losing that client to the competition. Sample Questions – “Tell me about a difficult situation you encountered with another person and how you handled it.” “What has been your greatest challenge, and how did you overcome it?” Positive Indicator – The applicant gives a scenario that focuses on how he or she resolved the situation to a win-win conclusion.
- 2) Ability to Make Decisions. Along with being able to solve problems effectively, associates need to be able to make good decisions. Flatter organizations force the decision-making process downward to all levels of employees. Associates who've grown accustomed to having decisions made for them under the traditional hierarchy

(or by their parents, if recent college graduates) will not fare well in the new work environment. Organizations need employees who can make decisions and implement them. People who are effective at gathering information can become paralyzed by the process of taking the information and making a decision from it, or putting their decisions into action once they've drawn a conclusion. Sample Questions – “What was the process you used when you bought your last automobile or other major purchase?” “Which factors were important to you in that process?” Positive Indicator – Desirable applicants will display a thorough approach to decision making by gathering information, evaluating choices, and acting on the option that is most feasible. Applicants' responses to these questions can also provide insight into their value systems.

- 3) Assertiveness. Assertiveness is a companion component to good decision making and problem solving and a forerunner to assuming responsibility. It's an attempt to create win-win situations without being too aggressive or giving up one's own rights. Recognizing the difference between assertive behavior, aggressive behavior, and passive behavior is the key to making a good hiring decision. Sample Question – “When was the last time you felt someone had violated your rights, and how did you deal with it?” Positive Indicator – Desirable applicants will indicate that they dealt effectively with the person, yet stood up for their own rights without becoming aggressive.
- 4) Ability to Assume Responsibility. Every manager has had the frustration of giving feedback to an employee regarding an issue, only to have the associate immediately indicate that the problem was the result of someone else's mistake. Managers want

employees who will step up and say, “I have made a mistake, and this is what I’ve done to correct it.” Sample Question – “Tell me about a mistake you made and what you learned from it.” Positive Indicator – Desirable applicants will not have to think too long to come up with a mistake where they’ve learned valuable lessons. Be wary of applicants who tell you they cannot think of any mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes: the best employees learn from them.

- 5) Honesty and Integrity. While we like to assume that all the people with whom we work display honesty and integrity, this is not the case in many situations. Sometimes the lack of these traits can be visible in seemingly trivial concerns such as taking home office supplies or fudging on sick leave. Or, they can be undetectable until the problem becomes very costly and/or a legal issue. Embezzlement, or not reporting obvious quality problems after a manufacturing run, or violating company policy or laws to keep customers are examples of situations where dishonesty and lack of integrity have gotten out of hand. Sample Questions – Present a hypothetical situation such as, “A major competitor has knowingly violated state ethics laws in pursuing business with state agencies. How would you react to learning about this, and would you encourage your company to do the same?” Positive Indicator – Applicants will not willingly indicate to an interviewer that they are dishonest or would engage in unethical behavior. Therefore, it is prudent of the interviewer to observe how the applicant reacts to the situation presented. Does the applicant ask a lot of clarifying questions that would indicate a “situational honesty”? Or, does the applicant take an “anything goes” stance in dealing with competitors? Even more, does the applicant express a

willingness to please the employer at all costs without knowing the company's stance on such behavior?

- 6) **Interpersonal Skills.** Interacting with other people is a vital component of all jobs. How well employees get along with their supervisors, team members, fellow workers, customers, vendors, and the associates they supervise can dictate the success of an organization. In today's downsized workplace where everyone is doing more with less, no one has the time or the energy to deliberate petty issues that distract from the job at hand. Employees who demonstrate good interpersonal skills can often prevent problems from occurring in the first place. Sample Question – "What types of people do you have the most problems dealing with and why?" Positive Indicator – Applicants who have a long list of people with whom they had problems obviously needs to improve their interpersonal skills. On the opposite end of the spectrum, interviewers should not accept a blanket statement from applicants who say they have never had a problem dealing with people. Everyone has experienced situations with people where there was friction.
- 7) **Ability to Support Others.** In today's team – oriented work environment, an organization's success can hinge on the ability of employees to work together and support each other in achieving goals. Flatter organizational charts now dictate that people are followers as well as leaders. Employees who always want to be in charge will create unnecessary stress for themselves and their colleagues. Sample Questions – "Tell me about a time you worked on a project but were not the leader. How did you contribute, and how did you support the leader?" Positive Indicator – Desirable

applicants can readily give examples of working in a team situation, and can provide specific instances of how they supported the goals of the team and the team leader.

8) Flexibility. The only thing certain in today's workplace is change. Employees who take a rigid approach to their jobs hamper the ability of the organization to achieve goals and experience positive growth. Those who adhere to the "that's not my job" mentality or who frequently espouse the "that's not the way we've always done that around here" theory may find themselves out of a job. Flexibility is the watchword for being able to respond to the rapid changes in today's workplace. Sample Questions – "When was the last time you were asked to work on a weekend when you had already made plans?" "How did you feel about it?" Positive Indicator – While no one wants to give up their weekend plans for work, the interviewer should look for applicants who are able to adjust quickly to the change with minimum stress. Applicants who indicate they were very upset about last-minute change will more than likely have problems dealing with other types of change inherent in the workplace.

9) Ability to Communicate. The most often cited trait employers seek in new employees is the ability to communicate well verbally and in writing. The nature of today's flatter organizations mandates that all employees, regardless of level, be able to communicate with customers, supervisors, vendors, and each other. A breakdown caused by poor communication or miscommunication can result in loss of revenue for the organization. Sample Question – In many ways, it is easy to discern communication skills from responses presented in an interview. To delve deeper, the interviewer should ask for specific examples of presentations and written documents such as business correspondence, reports, and memorandums. If the position requires a lot of writing, be

sure to ask for writing samples. Positive Indicator – Look for clarity of thought in responses and pay attention to grammar and vocabulary. Applicants who use poor grammar in their verbal responses will also use poor grammar in their written communications. But beware of the applicant who has the gift of gab that may not translate well in written communication.

10) Technological Competence. Technology has advanced to the level that everyone interacts with computers at least once a day, whether in the car or at the office. It is no longer necessary to be a programmer to have this interaction, but every associate needs to know basic software applications and how computers and technology can enhance job performance. Employees who are fearful of new technology will only hinder an organization's growth. Sample Questions – “What software applications have you used in the past, and in what context have you used them?” Positive Indicator – Desirable applicants will be familiar with software applications and comfortable utilizing technology in a variety of settings. Applicants who lack a basic familiarity with computers may demonstrate resistance in embracing new technologies.

11) Willingness to Accept Lifelong Learning. To stay abreast of changes in technology and maintain their technological competence, employees must be committed to lifelong learning. This trait will give them the ability to react positively to changes in the workforce. Employees who perceive that their learning ended when they received their most recent degree will not be able to keep up in a rapidly changing workplace. Sample Questions – “What was the last class you took, and what did you learn from it?” Or, “What was the last nonfiction book you read, and what did you learn from it?” Positive Indicator – Desirable applicants will demonstrate an enthusiasm about learning

and applying that knowledge to practical situations. Applicants who do not show an enthusiasm for learning, who have not taken classes, or who do not make a practice of reading, will also be reluctant to learn new skills in the workforce. (Lyles, Oct-Dec 1997, pg. 19-21).

The first groups of teams selected should be representative of people that they are willing to change, as opposed to those who show a resistance to change. According to Joinson (May 1999) elucidates in her article: “What you may want to do is work first people you know will have buy-in-get them working together and solving problems-and use them as advertisement. Other employees can take a look and say ‘those people are having a good time,’ and the teamwork can spread, 30.” Yeung (June 1999) emphasizes

Good team working can only be easy if you choose the right team members from the start. A team with the wrong mix of skills or personality types will never be as easy to manage as a team with a complementary set of skills and characters. If you have chosen wisely, the concepts of team working should be relatively straightforward. The difficulties are in managing individual differences and interpersonal dynamics – and that is where a great leader distinguishes him or herself from the crowd (pg. 41).

A team must be large enough to bring together people with complementary skills but small enough to gain coordination benefits. Holding a team accountable for a range of measures can be more effective than holding different departments accountable for conflicting goals. Celebrating the differences is the key to building better relationships on teams. Don’t expect or encourage teammates to be just like you. Reap the benefits of complementary styles (Huszczko, 1996, pg. 1).

1.2. Team roles clarity

As the second step in creating a team, team members should have a clear idea about their role in the team. The success of team projects may vary greatly depending on how much understanding individuals have about the goals, processes, background, orientation and thinking of other team members. One's temperament, upbringing, values, and ideas about "how things are done" are the foundation of people's different ideas about "how things should be done." These assumptions are not a problem when everyone has the same understanding. When they do not, a barrier to team effectiveness is created. And knowing how to eliminate the barrier is important in order to enjoy better communications, create more ideas and develop better products and services (Haught, Feb 1999, pg. 7).

Therefore, it is appropriate for the team to be in agreement about their roles from the beginning. They should be able to answer the questions: "Why am I here?" and "What can I contribute to this team?" Roles and responsibilities include the positions that team members hold in relation to the team and the duties that they might perform. Three positions generally take place: sponsor, stakeholder, and the steering committee.

The sponsor is a person who has to ensure that the roles and responsibilities are reviewed periodically and, most importantly, being followed. The sponsor's key responsibility is to work with all parties to guarantee that the work is progressing satisfactorily and that all individuals are meeting their commitments and fulfilling their responsibilities. If not, the sponsor bears the responsibility, the burden, of seeing that appropriate corrective action is initiated.

The stakeholders add value by providing input along the way; therefore, the team must ensure that it periodically briefs the stakeholders as the work progresses. This periodic updating enriches the quality of the data used by catching errors and minimizing oversights.

The steering committee should periodically summarize the work so far in order to check the team's direction and progress in relation to the deliverables, principles, givens, and scope. Steering-committee members should ask certain strategic questions: Are we still on course? Is there any new information to consider? Is there some help the team needs? Are there some barriers that need to be removed? Should additional resources be made available? (Aslinger, May/Jun 1998, pg. 42-44).

I.3. Proposed team tasks

Once team members are selected and their roles clarified, team tasks should be proposed as an elucidation of targets to be accomplished. However, targets are not wish lists – they have to be achievable, yet challenging enough to motivate team members.

This process requires a lot of devotion from team members in order to have success in such duties. Members should be fully committed to contributing to team goals. Therefore, they must put aside their personal agendas and ignore interruptions outside of team issues while they are “clustering”. This team isolation from issues not related to team tasks is essential to empower the team's concentration and dedication with team tasks. Therefore, team members need balance between the demands of their regular job and their team involvement. A team that works well together can focus on solving problems, making decisions by consensus, developing processes and getting the task done.

The problem is that there are hidden concerns that, like undercurrents, pull team members away from their obvious tasks. When they walk through the door into a meeting, team members are beset with conflicting emotions: excitement and anxiety about being on the team, loyalty to their divisions or departments, nervous anticipation about the project's success. If left unattended these undercurrents can inhibit a group's chance of becoming an effective team. Every group must

therefore spend time on activities not directly related to a task, activities that build understanding and support in the group. Accordingly to Scholtes, these are issues not often spoken about, but common to many organizations, and they fall into three categories:

- 1) Personal identity in the team. It is natural for team members to wonder how they will fit into the team. The most common worries are those associated with: a) Membership inclusion: “Do I feel like an insider or outsider? Do I belong? Do I want to belong? What can I do to fit in?” b) Influence, control, and mutual trust: “Who’s calling the shots here? Who will have the most influence? Will I have influence? Will I be listened to? Will I be able to contribute? Will I be allowed to contribute?” c) Getting along and mutual loyalty: “How will I get along with other team members? Will we be able to develop any cooperative spirit?”
- 2) Relationships among team members. With few exceptions, team members want the team to succeed, to make improvements, and to work cooperatively. They extend personal concerns to the team: “What kind of relationships will characterize this team? Will members make and keep commitments? How will members of different ranks interact? Will we be friendly and informal or will it be strictly business oriented? Will we be open or guarded in what we say? Will we be able to work together, or will we argue and disagree all the time? Will people like or dislike me? Will I like or dislike them?”
- 3) Identity with the organization. Team members usually identify strongly with their departments or divisions, and they will need to know membership in the team will not affect those roles and responsibilities: “Will my loyalty to the team conflict with loyalty to my coworkers? Will my responsibilities as a team conflict with my everyday

duties?” Usually it is the team’s work that suffers if the two compete. Just as team members must reach outside the group to maintain ties with their departments, so must the team as a whole build relationships throughout the organization. Political astuteness is crucial. Finding influential people to champion the team and its project can make a big difference in the support your team receives from the organization. A team’s relationship with its manager or sponsor is one avenue for creating such support within the organization (Scholtes, 1996, pg. 1).

Although teams must have flexibility to develop their tasks, determining the scope of a team’s boundaries is also very important to assure the organization that the team will not go off limits and/or do something that was not under the scope of the organization’s business plan. In order to promote such control and establish team’s boundaries, organizations commonly encourage the creation of sub-teams to concentrate and stay more specifically on their task orientation.

There are times that there are no better people to say what should be done to improve performance than the people who are directly involved with their own activity. Antrim (May 1998) conducted a survey that asked staff members from an agency what they believe could be done to improve their productivity and performance. The survey identified the following: more training, particularly on office automation and other software; smoother, more efficient workflow; more participation and involvement in agency improvement activities; more cooperation and teamwork; and more fun to balance the hard work and stress. To accomplish such opportunities, four separate teams were organized to address these demands.

- 1) The Professional Development Team focuses on meeting staff members’ needs for training and development.

- 2) The Operations Improvement Team has the mission of increasing the efficiency of the agency's operating processes and procedures.
- 3) The Performance Review System Team was formed to design a new performance evaluation program that would help individuals perform at their best, and also help build a winning culture throughout the agency.
- 4) The Quality of Work Life Team, the fourth team, took on the challenge of building a work environment with more collaboration, teamwork, and fun. (Antrim, May 1998, pg. 81-82)

Each team has made significant contributions to the agency and to its people. Here are five reasons why they are so successful, the keys to effective improvement teams accordingly to Antrim (Feb 1999):

- 1) Enthusiastic team members. Staff members are on teams because they want to be. They are volunteers. They registered strong support for forming improvement teams when the idea was suggested during an all-agency meeting that was called last January to present and discuss the results of the survey. A memo that asked interested staff members to sign up for the team of their choice was circulated after the meeting. The memo also clarified the commitments that would be expected of team members: to participate actively, to miss team meetings only for unavoidable emergencies, and to occasionally perform minimal assignments between team meetings. Team meetings would be limited to one hour and would be held every week, or every other week, depending on the need.
- 2) Clear direction and accountabilities. The first task each team completed was to define its mission, the overall objectives that would guide its activities. In addition, Gary

Pyne and his managers made it clear that teams would be held accountable for producing results, for recommending high-gain improvement projects and for developing solutions that are cost-effective, have quality, and are timely. The teams are accountable to five members. They submit their improvement project ideas to the team for approval before they proceed. And they report on key activities and progress made until the improvement project has been completed successfully.

- 3) Effective team meetings. Because no one has time to waste on ineffective meetings, the teams began by organizing and agreeing on ground rules. Each team selected a leader. The leader was responsible for: opening the meeting by reviewing the agenda and desired outcomes for the meeting; keeping the meeting flowing in a direction that will accomplish the outcomes; encouraging participation and open discussion; and facilitating agreements and decisions. Each team selected a minute's taker to record key decisions and agreements made, any assignments accepted by team members, and any topics that were postponed for later discussion. Volunteers from the teams filled these roles. But the volunteers committed to serve in the role for three months only; they could resign after three months if they wanted to and/or if others wanted to volunteer for the role. Each team also agreed on the ground rules it would follow during its meetings. Typical ground rules included: starting meetings on time with everyone present; everyone participates; all opinions are valid; put-downs, killer statements, and missiles are not allowed; be open to new ideas and think "out of the box"; offer solutions, not complaints; keep to the point; have fun.
- 4) Effective problem solving and implementation process. Clearly, the work of the teams is to identify and implement meaningful improvements. Some improvements are

relatively easy to achieve, e.g., initiating activities that promote better teamwork and more fun throughout the agency. Others, like simplifying workflow, can be more difficult. The more difficult the assignment, the more team members need to apply simple tools and techniques for analyzing and solving problems, and for implementing their solutions.

- 5) Recognition and rewards. Team members know that they and their accomplishments are appreciated at the management team. They receive recognition and praise at all-agency meetings. In addition, a one-page newsletter, "Management Team Report," kept all staff members informed as the teams identified and began working on their initial projects. And each team member can receive a more tangible reward at salary review time. The new personal achievement review system includes "significant special projects completed" as a factor in determining compensation changes, and membership is a significant special project (Antrim, Feb 1999, pg. 100-101).

Therefore, in order to team members achieve higher success in accomplishing their tasks, they need to be fully concentrated on their purpose and not allow conflict emotions get them away from it. Each team member should have identification with the team and pride and joy working to the organization. The organization, on the other hand, should leave the teams to elaborate their directions without constraints and just give them a scope about their boundaries.

I.4. Commitment to teams

Commitment to teams as a defined purpose should happen from both sides: the organization's direction and the teams' orientation. This reciprocal guidance is an essential match to perpetuate an encouraging atmosphere and to reach progressive outcomes at the end. All levels of the organization should be supporting team responsibilities as a defined purpose, and on the

other hand, team members should be committed, with the organization directions as the defined goals. According to recent research, personal friendships between employees can result in increased productivity, but only if the friends are strongly committed to the group's or organization's goals. (Ross, Mar/Apr 1997, pg. 8-9).

According to Bishop (Feb 1997), managers may be able to increase employee commitment by focusing attention on specific variables such as:

- 1) Engage teams in team building exercises and training – this increases commitment to the team by increasing member's satisfaction with each other and by reducing interceder conflict.
 - 2) Train first-level supervisors to be visible and alert to teams' needs. This is especially challenging in self-directed work team environments, where working as independently from direct supervision as possible is one of the goals.
 - 3) Pay special attention to inventory control, maintenance and repair issues, and the availability of supplies. Downtime may cost the company more than just lost productivity; it may have a negative effect on organizational commitment.
 - 4) Pay close attention to procedures and technical and team training for employees. High levels of task interdependence have positive effects on organizational and team commitment, and a direct influence on employees' willingness to help each other.
- Bishop (Feb 1997, pg. 108)

The people participating in teams should be people who would already be involved with prospective changes. In addition, team members should be people who have the power to make decisions and implement them. They might represent a group of individuals that holds authority and responsibility, rather than a single manager. Regan, president of The Journey to Teams Inc. of

Raleigh, N.C., strongly believes that the first step in creating a team is building individuals. “A team is a group where people can think together and arrive at a better solution. If people can’t think on their own, they can’t think as a team.” Regan says that blue-collar workers are often conditioned not to think at work. “It’s a habit that when something goes wrong, you find a manager, engineer or staff to fix the problem,” he says. “Supervisors must stop acting like babysitters.” Johnson, associate director of the Center for the Study of Work Teams (CSWT) at the University of North Texas, adds: “Managers have to transition from command and control to coach and facilitator. Instead of focusing on day-to-day details, they can think strategically. They don’t give up power, they just have different power” (Joinson, May 1999, pg. 31).

Mutual accountability is another term that expresses commitment by which team may feel motivated and engaged with the team to do their best. Once team members do real work together toward a common objective, they may receive a fair and constructive hearing about their views. By following through on such support, team members may preserve and extend the trust between them. Working with such devotion, team members will not disperse in crisis, but will be willing to work together to reach a common ground of constructive and improved solutions. Consequently, team members may be responsible for the effects of their actions and they may be willing to explain and to be criticized for them. Once constructive criticism is given, new ideas may come up. Knowing that the team is achieving its goals provides a source of pride for team members. This is a circular process by which team members may increase their accountability with the team, as the team reaches more positive outcomes.

In order to be productive, members of a team need to conform to qualifications such as a multitude of skills and desire for performance, since they are committed to a common purpose. Moreover, in order to be creative and original, natural and spontaneous participation from each

member of the team is desirable. It is essential to ensure that every member has an opportunity to add his or her thoughts to discussions.

1.5. Communication

Communication is a key word for success in building teams. Misunderstandings should be avoided as much as possible. Spell out likely differences in team member's actions and behavior. Outline specific scenarios illustrating the likely differences, and point out opportunities and possible pitfalls. Teams cannot succeed if people jealously guard their projects and see helping others as a loss to themselves. Try confronting this negative behavior rather than ignoring it (Mendzela, Sep 1997, pg. 62).

Open communication is essential in creating a constructive relationship between team members. Members must be able to express their opinions freely, without fear of retribution, and feel that suggestions will be taken seriously. The team might also need to agree on whether politically sensitive topics of discussion in meetings should be kept within the confines of the team or shared with other employees (Yeung, Jun 1999, pg. 41).

The better a team member's interpersonal skills, the stronger his or her relationships will be. Members must learn to accept personal differences and be willing to build on each other's strengths. Team members need to have respect, trust and consideration for one another. Team members should never use profanity. Instead of creating a shield to protect himself, a team member should make an effort to connect with other team members emotionally and without barriers. If one sees other people as inferior and tries to step on them, one might not learn from them. Thus, team members should show their vulnerabilities and pay attention to one another's feelings. Research has shown that emotions, when properly managed, can drive trust, loyalty and

commitment and result in many of the greatest productivity gains, innovations and accomplishments of individuals, teams and organizations (Cooper, Apr 1998, pg. 48).

Centralized authority may restrict the exchange of communication and will only allow top management to make decisions and may not encourage employees' feedback. Therefore, decentralized authority should be encouraged, whenever it is possible, in order for authority to be delegated, two-way communication to flow freely, and the decision-making process to speed up. This process may also require the organization to downsize in order to facilitate interaction between people from both horizontal and vertical positions in the organization. Downsizing may cause employees to be willing to take more authority and responsibilities. So, this process may help to improve productivity, reduce costs, and enhance customer service. This methodology may correspond to employee needs and dissolve potential personal conflicts between team members.

Teams may help companies to implement fresh and innovative ideas with the aim to mirror the thinking of a large set of people from the organization. This idea will have a greater chance of success if it is implemented by one person that holds power in the organization. Once an idea is reached by consensus, and people in the team have unanimously agreed to implement a plan, individuals will be more willing to cooperate in order to reach the desired goals of the group. Conversely, individuals may feel resentment and be unwilling to compromise, if they receive a command from a superior person in the organizational hierarchy to carry out a project. This is particularly true if they did not participate in generating the project or if they do not agree with the project's ideal. However, consensus decision-making is not just a way to reach cooperation. It is a search for the best decision through the exploration of the best of everyone's thinking. As more ideas are addressed and more potential problems are discussed, a synthesis of ideas takes place and the final decision is often better than any single idea that was present at the beginning.

People involved in teams should make no previous judgments about an unclear situation in order to avoid wrong assumptions. Teamwork involves learning to make decisions by consensus whereby all the members find a common ground. Arriving at consensus may not be the first choice, but is a decision that everyone can live with and understand why it is best (Scholtes, 1996, pg. 1). Therefore, it is imperative that team members reach consensus and agreement in their decisions in order to keep moving forward and at the same time be effective. Furthermore, even if there is one member of the team that feels uncomfortable with the team's decision, the team should revisit such a decision and work to find a consensus. This process will help all team members to feel considered and respected. In turn, each member will be motivated to be more participatory and to do his or her best.

I.6. Virtual teams

With the concern of meeting without direct contact, and consequently, with fewer communication resources, team members no longer need to be housed in one location to work together. With recent advances in technology, virtual teams are seen as the smart way to organize for flexible and cost-effective operations. Teams can become virtual with a common purpose that uses technology to cross time zones, distance, and the boundaries of organizations.

In team-based organizations, networks can help teams avoid fragmentation and isolation. The network, not the pyramid, becomes the conceptual model for how people work together to achieve goals. The easiest way to transition from hierarchy/bureaucracy to a networked organization is to add links to connect function. Communication flows directly between the people who need the information and those who have it. Individuals are at the core of virtual teams, and everyone in the team must be autonomous and self-reliant but also interdependent. For example, instead of sending one experienced technician to attend to a customer request, the

organization could put all technicians online to solve the same problem. This procedure may be less costly for the organization, and problems might be solved more quickly than in a traditional way. Boone (1997) exemplifies,

Videoconferencing at 3M is bringing the people with knowledge at the right time, no matter the place. 3M now has 77 videoconferencing suites located around the world, tapping a vast amount of internal knowledge. Izzi explains, "This way I get lots of team members involved with the expert, not just the one guy who would have traveled to the meeting in the past. We get a kind of teamwork that just couldn't have happened before." An achievement that is giving 3M a very nice competitive advantage (pg. 253).

The utilization of virtual teams has also increased due to the increasing demand of business travelers that are exploring different ways to better balance their spending time at work and family. Separation from family is high on the list of concerns for most business travelers, according to several recent studies examining the effects of frequent business travel. "Business travelers feel like nomads," said Jonathan Bricker, a researcher at the University of Washington in Seattle. "They don't feel quite settled, and they don't quite feel like they have a home." Therefore, companies are grappling with these concerns by becoming more aware of the stress caused by increasing travel and offering technological tools like videoconferencing to cut down on trips (Dolan, June 2000, pg. 7A).

Telecommunications in the global economy has brought new partners and new ways of working to millions of people. The explosion of links across every conceivable boundary is staggering in its complexity as languages, cultures, governments, and human behavior all play their parts. According to Harvard history professor Robert Putman, three things are necessary to

develop social capital: trust, reciprocity, and dense social networks. Trust is first. All else flows from it. Often, seemingly irrelevant, unrelated-to-work conversations among employees build trust and will make their working relationships more effective in the future. Reciprocity means give and take. People need the sense that giving will eventually result in receiving. In organizations where people are well connected in dense social networks, they tend to be healthier and more economically stable (Lipnack, May 1999, pg. 14).

II. Developing teams

Once a team has been built, it moves through stages of development until it reaches its maturity status. During these stages, the team may be allocated within the organization to continuously provide contributions that will pay back all the efforts that were invested in it until the maturity stage.

II.1. Stages of team development

As the team matures, members gradually learn to cope with the emotional and group pressures they face. As a result, the team goes through fairly predictable stages. The stages of development of teams may vary in timing and sequence because many things affect the team's development; diversity of team members, how they have known each other, how they have worked together in the past, and how clear they are about their roles.

There are basically five stages of team development that most teams go through: Form, Storm, Norm, Perform, and Adjourning. Team members, by recognizing these stages and assessing the current level of functioning, can begin to acknowledge and to articulate more effective ways to work together by forecasting when and how they should deal with team growth. Therefore, team members must build a follow-up process to ensure that performance continues to improve. The characteristics of each stage and expected member's behavior are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Stages of Team Development: Themes and Behaviors

Stage	Theme	Behavior	
		Task	Relationship
Form	Awareness	Orientation	Dependency
Storm	Conflict	Resistance	Hostility
Norm	Cooperation	Communication	Cohesion
Perform	Productivity	Problem Solving	Interdependence
Adjourning	Separation	Closure	Celebration

Note from handouts of “Principles of Team Building,” presented by R. Briggs and S. Nettle-Lechebo, (October 14, 1998). United way of greater Rochester 16th annual community conference. Courtesy of SkillPath.

In the Forming stage, the new team members may reveal dependency between themselves and may demonstrate mixed attitudes such as: excitement, optimism, reservation, skepticism, and anxiety. At first, the progress on work will be very slow because there is so much going on to distract members’ attention. This is perfectly normal. To build trust and confidence during the forming stage, the leader should; help members get to know each other, provide clear direction and purpose, involve members in developing plans, clarify roles, establish ways of working together, and provide the information the team needs to get started.

In the Storming stage, the members may reveal hostility with each other by testing boundaries and arguing about actions and methods. They begin to realize that the task is different and more difficult than imagined, and they become testy, anxious, or overzealous. They try to rely solely on their personal and professional experience, resisting any need for collaborating with other team members. To build self-direction, the leader should; resolve issues of power and authority, for example, don’t allow one person’s power to squash others’ contributions, develop and implement agreements about how decisions are made and who makes them, and adapt the

leadership role to allow the team to become more independent. Encourage members to take on more responsibilities.

In the Norming stage, the members may achieve cohesion by relating together in a reasonable way to form an atmosphere that can encourage integration and cooperation between members. As team members get used to working together, their initial resistance fades away. They start helping each other stay afloat, rather than competing with one another. To build cooperation, the leader should, fully utilize team members' skills, knowledge, and experience, encourage and acknowledge members' respect for each other, and encourage members to "roll up their sleeves" and work collaboratively.

In the Performing stage, the members may gain interdependence and become synergistic and effective. As team members become more comfortable with each other, and as they better understand the work and what is expected of them, they become a more effective unit with everyone working in concert. In terms of productivity, the Performing stage is when the team is at its best. By this stage, the team has settled its relationships and expectations. They can begin performing – diagnosing and solving problems, and choosing and implementing changes. At last, team members have discovered and accepted each other's strengths and weaknesses and learned what their roles are. To build openness to change, the leader should, update the team's methods and procedures to support cooperation, help the team understand how to manage change, represent and advocate for the team with other groups and individuals, and monitor work progress and celebrate achievements.

In the Adjourning stage, the members celebrate what they have achieved and applaud the organization's move toward being more effective. At this time, they suspend their activities until they receive a new assignment.

II.2. Characteristics of effective teams

In “The One Minute Manager Builds Hi-Performing Teams,” Blanchard (Feb 1998) presents seven characteristics of the Perform model and highlights desired behaviors of an effective team.

- 1) Purpose. Members of high-performing teams share a sense of purpose. They are clear about what the team’s “work” is and why it is important. They can describe a picture of what the team intends to achieve. They have developed mutually agreed upon and challenging goals that relate to the team’s vision strategies for achieving goals are clear. Each member understands his or her role in realizing the vision.
- 2) Empowerment. Members are confident about the team’s ability to overcome obstacles and to realize its vision. A sense of mutual respect enables members to share responsibilities, help each other out, and take initiative to meet challenges. Policies, rules and team processes enable members to do their jobs easily. Members have opportunities to grow and learn new skills. There is a sense of personal as well as collective power.
- 3) Relationship and Communication. The team is committed to open communication, and group members feel that they can state their opinions, thoughts and feelings without fear. Listening is considered as important as speaking. Differences of opinion and perspective are valued, and methods of managing conflict are understood. Through honest and caring feedback, members are aware of their strengths and weaknesses as team members. There is an atmosphere of trust and acceptance and a sense of community. Group cohesion is high.

- 4) Flexibility. Group members are flexible and perform different task and maintenance function as needed. Members share responsibility for team development and leadership. The strengths of each member are identified and used, and individual efforts are coordinated when necessary. The team is fluid and open to opinions and feelings, hard work and fun. Members recognize the inevitability and desirability of change and adapt to changing conditions.
 - 5) Optimal productivity. High-performing teams produce significant results. There is a commitment to high standards and quality results. They get the job done, meet deadlines and achieve goals. The team has developed effective decision making and problem-solving methods that result in achieving optimum results and encourage participation and creativity. Members have developed strong skills in group process as well as accomplishing tasks.
 - 6) Recognition and appreciation. Individual and team accomplishments are frequently recognized by the team leader – as well as team members – by celebrating milestones, accomplishments and events. Team accomplishments are valued by the larger organization. Members feel highly regarded within the team and experience a sense of personal accomplishment in relation to their team and task contributions.
 - 7) Morale. Members are enthusiastic about the team's work, and each person feels pride in being a member of the team. Confident and committed, members are optimistic about the future. There is a sense of excitement about individual and team accomplishments as well as the way team members work together. Team spirit is high.
- (Blanchard, Feb 1998, pg. 4-5).

II.3. Characteristics of ineffective teams

The main difference between effective and ineffective teams is whether or not they pull together. Ineffective teams lack alignment, so team members are pulling in different directions. The result is wasted energy. By contrast, effective teams pull in the same direction to achieve the team's goals. Teams that perform poorly may have unclear or shifting goals and priorities, poor communication, a lack of trust and commitment, a lack of cooperation, overpowering individualism, and inadequate skills (Bragg, May 1999, pg. 49).

In summary, ineffective teams are a result of poor planning. Their most common characteristics can be seen by examining the characteristics of effective teams. For example;

- 1) Lack of purpose. The team "work" is not clear and team members don't share a sense of purpose. They do not develop the team's vision and it is not clear what the team should achieve. Furthermore, each member does not understand his or her role in the team.
- 2) Discouragement. Members do not have opportunities to grow and learn new skills. They are not confident about the team's ability to overcome obstacles and to realize its vision. The lack of mutual respect does not enable members to share responsibilities, help each other out, nor to take initiative to meet challenges. Therefore, there is no sense of collective power.
- 3) Relationship and Communication. The team is not willing to have open communication, and group members feel that they cannot state their opinions, thoughts and feelings without fear. Members try to impose their opinions without listening to feedback from others. There is no encouragement to participate and be creative. They are not connected enough to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses as team

members. There is an atmosphere of distrust and rejection of new team members. Group members are trying to “work” individually and without cohesion.

- 4) Stiffness. The team is not prepared to perform different tasks. Members do not share responsibility for team development and leadership. The strengths of each member are not identified and, therefore, wasted. The team is rigid about new opinions and they are not open to changing actual conditions. They are, therefore, not willing to take risks and create any kind of improvements.
- 5) Inefficiency. Low-performing teams may not produce significant results. There is no commitment to high standards and quality results. They are used to not getting jobs done by their deadlines. The team has not developed any effective decision making and problem-solving methods. Members have not developed skills for the in-group process to accomplishing tasks.
- 6) Depreciation and diminution. The team leader does not recognize individual and team accomplishments. Team accomplishments are not valued by the larger organization. Members feel disregarded within the team and experience a sense of personal frustration in relation to their team and task contributions.
- 7) Low morale. Members are indifferent about the team’s work, and each person feels no gratification in being a member of the team. Members are pessimistic and insecure about the future. There is no excitement about individual and team accomplishments, and the way team members work together. There is no team spirit.

III. Managing teams

It is important to recognize that team-building activities are not one-time events. It is an ongoing process that should always be sprouting new achievements and encouraging new participants to join the team.

III.1 Maintenance approach

After teams are created, it is necessary to instill a proper maintenance approach in order for teams to continue to be productive. Continuous team learning requires four different behaviors that take place within each team activity. While difficult in theory, the application must be practiced by seeking to continuous' learn and reflect every time the team meets. Team members learn by doing the following, investing time, managing differences, gaining full participation, and getting results. This dialogue becomes real time learning and reflection, and allows the facilitator to guide team members to their own individual learnings. Learning applies to the particular team, the organizational setting and the particular challenge. Learning takes place continuously as the team hones its skills, increases its performance, and experiences the euphoria of a well-oiled system. At each stage of development, reflection must continue as the team members become more proficient in using the skills of team learning to improve performance (Roberts, Jun 1997, pg. 16).

The central factor in managing teams well is managing the interdependence among team members. There are two ways to look at the issue of interdependence, through the nature of the work or through the preferences of team members. First and foremost, the degree of interdependence with which team members' work should be based on the requirements of the task. Building a high degree of interaction and coordination into work that does not require these

attributes is unnecessary, even burdensome. It is just as costly for group members to work alone when the task would be better accomplished through greater interaction.

Interdependence can take several forms, depending upon the work required of the team. According to Drexler some common variations based on the nature of the work are the following:

- 1) Interdependence based solely on results. For the team to be successful overall, individuals have to work well, but they don't have to work together. For example, the number of strawberries picked by each member of a team of farm workers affects the groups overall results, but the team members do the work alone.
- 2) Interdependence based on sharing of tasks. Sometimes team members work independently for a significant part of the time and hand in hand at other times. A sales group may work together to develop materials and sales strategy, then separate to contact prospects.
- 3) Full interdependence. The demand for collaboration and mutual support is practically constant on some teams, for example a racing crew on a sailboat.
- 4) Interchangeability. On some teams, members not only depend fully on one another, they actually replace one another, such as the members of a labor union's negotiating team. On a team like this, the give and take is unscripted, intuitive and acted on in a moment and based on a collaborative sense of the circumstances.

Furthermore, managers must recognize that people are not totally malleable and must make careful decisions about pacing changes. The implementation of teams is likely to require a gradual process of molding the system to the people on hand and molding the people to the desired system. The lesson is that interdependent work requires people who can work interdependently. And the

ease with which individuals can work interdependently depends on several factors based on a personal perspective:

- 1) Trust. Some individuals are more disposed to be trusting than others are, and some individuals conduct themselves in ways that elicit trust more than do others. Interdependent work inherently involves risk and requires trust. People who are more cautious about taking risks, are less trusting, or act in ways that diminish how others trust them, tend to be less successful at working interdependently.
- 2) Extroversion. Some people are naturally more outgoing and sociable; they impart and receive a lot more information. Others like to spend more time alone. In this sense, extroverted people may take more readily to teamwork, while introverts may have to work harder at it, particularly if the interactions are intense and constant. This is not to say that extroverts generally make better team players than introverts. But at the extremes of the scale, the style of an extrovert may fit some teams more comfortably.
- 3) Dependency needs. Some people tend to look inward to guide their actions. This tendency-which may be described as independence, field independence or internal locus of control-predisposes such people to prefer jobs in which they are masters of their own fate or exercise a lot of control. The opposite tendency is to be dependent, to defer to others and to rely on them as a source of strength. Those at either extreme tend to be ineffective team players. The best team players are found in the middle of this range because they are able to draw on their own strengths as well as look to others as a resource.
- 4) Conflict avoidance. Some people need more harmony than others do in work situations. Conflicts worry them, even more so when they are discussed. Because

conflict is an inevitable element of teamwork, an inability to come to grips with conflict seriously limits the potential for team building. (Drexler, Sep 1998, pg. 52-62)

Therefore, managing teams is an ongoing process that is fundamental to maintain a team alive. The desire from team members to mature cooperatively with the team group is a must. It may require time, interpersonal skills, and a lot of patience. But, going through the process of managing and maintaining the team alive is the real learning route. There are no unique technique or right formula to manage teams. However, the following three steps may facilitate the process of managing teams to go more effectively: training, establishment of performance measurement and programs for recognition of effective teams.

III.1.A. Training.

Today's managers and shop-floor supervisors cannot rely totally on their own knowledge and must, in order to be effective, rely on workers' expertise. Supervisors and subordinates must be trained to see themselves and their work as part of an operation that is larger than their immediate on-the-job surroundings. Such training might include practicing problem solving in groups that includes both supervisors and workers. Equipment operators must learn how to: 1. Communicate and listen effectively, 2. Keep supervisors and coworkers informed, and 3. Resolve issues with others. A team effort in training means that team meetings must occur regularly, and those meetings need good leaders. In dealing with any changes, the best way to allay fears is through open communication. Management must let workers know about planned changes that will take place. Workers, who understand why changes are taking place, are more likely to seek retraining and less likely to suffer losses in self-esteem. Moreover, they will understand how cross training helps them and the company (Beck, Mar 1988, pg. 84).

While human resource personnel may be best utilized to train facilitators, facilitators may be the best source of training for team leaders. In addition, facilitators or team leaders may be the best source of training for team members. Such a system may help to forge partnerships between facilitators, team leaders, and team members, will enhance the knowledge and skills of all parties involved in team activities, and make the use of teams truly a “team” effort (Higgins, Jun 1999, pg. 1).

Companies must create teams from existing employees and usually cannot select only those with desired skills. Specific technical training may be required for new duties, but HR (Human Resources Dept.) also should consider leadership courses and similar types of training that will help team members adopt management-oriented behaviors. “People are pretty adaptable, ” says Doug Johnson, associate director of the Center for the Study of Work Teams (CSWT) at the University of North Texas, “and most people have an affinity for working in groups. A small percentage don’t work well.” He adds that new groups almost certainly will need training in areas like team problem-solving, conflict management, meeting management and the like (Joinson, May 1999, pg. 31).

“When you put teams into place, a lot of uncertainty exists for about 18-24 months,” says Myers. “There may even be a dip in productivity at first, which is the cost of transformation.” Whether you call it maturing through stages or “forming, storming, norming and performing,” HR can make sure teams stay on track by keeping management commitment high, promoting appropriate training for team members, and establishing metrics to measure team success (Joinson, May 1999, pg. 32).

III.1.B. Establishment of performance measurement.

Rodger Ballentine, co-director of the Center for the Study of Work Teams (CSWT) at the University of North Texas, emphasizes that a team has to be able to measure its work and how that work aligns with company goals. “If I’m on a team that places circuitry on boards, for instance, I need to understand how our team quality, speed and costs could affect overall business goals,” Ballentine says. “Without measurement, some teams will dwell on non-production issues.” Furthermore, such programs can be an excellent start to building commitment and teamwork throughout an organization.

It is important to make teamwork and contribution to the team more important than the current individually focused appraisal system. Make it clear to all parties that collaborative behavior such as active listening, balancing inquiry and advocacy, respecting others’ ideas, contributing to team projects, and helping others will be evaluated. Use some form of peer response to evaluate individuals on these requirements. This kind of evaluation process can quickly shape a collaborative culture (Cross, Spring 1997, pg. 43).

Organizations should, therefore, develop a measurement system that helps to qualify their performance in order to point out areas where their performance needs improvement. Performance measurement systems are meant to align behaviors with the organization’s goals. If management tells people what they intend to measure in order to monitor progress, management runs the risk of choosing measures that just do not motivate. Allowing teams and individuals to choose their own measures and targets, and to adjust them as they see fit, is the best way to harness the intelligence and imagination of the organization’s intellectual capital. The other dimension in this dynamic system is the impact of results on the strategy itself. A performance measurement system is truly dynamic when measures of shifts in the environment are incorporated into the feedback loop. The

feedback can tell team members not only well they're progressing, but also whether the definition of progress has to change (Gooderham, Oct 1997, pg. 8).

Another basis for measuring the progress of goal attainment is to use the market. The practice of benchmarking is widely used today for comparing one's company to another, or one department to another. If the team's goal is to become the quality leader in the marketplace, the members should look to the quality of their competitors for a reference standard. While many industries have standards representative of all companies, it would be difficult to obtain specific information about a competitor. An alternative would be to ask customers directly how one's product compares to the competition. This information may also be used for a team to check on their progress toward attainment of their goal (Hendrix, 1996, pg. 1).

Most teams will require a measurement system that enables every member of the team to understand what is expected of them and that provides a way for members to assess how they are doing compared to these expectations. This method creates a feedback loop, in which team members get clear direction based on performance measurements of what they are to accomplish. These measurements keep individuals and the team focused and facilitates the successful accomplishment of goals. Success, now clearly measurable, creates additional motivation, and employees are more likely to maintain a consistently high level of performance over time. Therefore, the measurement system will need to include:

- 1) Statement of the results the team will be working to achieve with measures and performance standards for each result.
- 2) A statement of each individual's results, with measures and performance standards for each result.

- 3) Clear picture of the priorities and relative importance of the team and individual results.
- 4) Plan for how to collect and summarize data, so the team and individuals will know how they are performing compared to the performance standards.

Effective team measurement hinges on a clear identification of team priorities, expected team results, and the proper measurements to use to address individual and team performance.

The following steps can be followed to devise effective team performance measurements:

- 1) Review the existing organizational measures. Make sure that the measures above and around the team are known to the team and linked to the team's measures. It is important to ensure that the team can affect these measures.
- 2) Define team measurement points. Select the best alternatives for identifying starting points for team measurement. Selecting the best alternatives and using them to identify the team's accomplishments provides the basis for all further measurement. There are four methods for identifying the starting point for team measurement:
 - a) Team-customer diagram. This diagram shows the linkages between the team and the internal and external customers it serves as well as the products and services these customers need from the team. For example, a greeting card company showing team, team's customers and products and services the customer needs from the team.
 - b) Team accomplishments supporting organizational measures. This helps the team identify the accomplishments it has control over and what will lead to the organization's success. For example, reduce cycles time or product cost, increase sales, or customer retention rate.

- c) Team-accomplishment pyramid. This method seeks to identify the hierarchy of results that the organization must produce and to select those that link the team to the organization's results. For example, increase sales and profitability. The problem with using measures to link teams to the organization is that it sometimes puts the teams in a position of trying to affect an outcome over which they have little or no control. For example, the sales measure is correct for a sales team, but since the team can't control expenses in any meaningful way, the profit measure should not apply. If the team is a design or customer service team, neither sales nor profits make much sense as measures.
- d) Work-process mapping. This method seeks to identify places in a work process that are worth measuring. Work processes are a series of steps that usually cut across departments and provide some value-added service or product to a customer. For example, the delivery of the final product to the hands of the retailer and customer, or the cycle time across the entire process.
- 3) Identify individual team-member accomplishments that support the team. Identify the results each team member must produce to support the team's results or work process. Individuals raised in the North American culture expect to be judged on both a team and individual basis. While comfortable with being evaluated on things only a team could achieve, they want to be recognized for their individual contributions too.
- 4) Weigh the accomplishments. The team should discuss and agree upon the relative importance of each accomplishment. The team can use percentage weighing to discuss priorities and agree on what is really important.

- 5) Create measures for each accomplishment. Identify the numeric and descriptive yardsticks that will be used to gauge how well results have been achieved. Good measures are those that can be verified and observed by someone else. One way, is first to identify a general measure and then break it down by identifying more specific ones. There are four general measures a team can use, quantity, quality, cost, and timeliness. Specific measures describe in numeric or descriptive terms which parts of the accomplishments the team wants to track.
- 6) Create team and individual performance standards. Define how well the team and individuals have to perform to meet expectations. For numeric measures, the team would ask, “How many is the team expected to produce?” or “What level of performance must the team achieve to help the organization achieve its goals?” For descriptive measures, the team would ask, “For each factor the judge is looking at, what would this person observe that shows the team has met expectations?”
- 7) Decide how to track performance. Identify how the team will collect the data for each performance standard and feed back to the team. (Zigon, Jan/Feb 1997, pg. 38-47)

III.1.C. Programs for recognition of effective teams.

In order for teams to be effective in the long run, team-oriented behaviors need to be reinforced. Individuals need to be recognized for their contributions. Team members need to understand how effective their collective efforts really are. For there to be results and improvements in the processes, feedback and rewards need to be provided. If teams are to be taken as a serious business strategy, they must have an impact on overall organization effectiveness. All rewards, financial bonuses as well as improvements in job security and

symbolic recognition gestures, should be provided through a system that not only reinforces team effectiveness and satisfaction but also encourages collaboration across teams.

Recognition should not come only from superiors in the organizational hierarchy, but also from people who employees relate to. Frequently, authentic peer recognition has added more value to an employee than if it would come from his or her supervisor.

Behaviors that are not recognized become extinguished. For example, if no one says anything about people showing up on time for team meetings, someone will show up late. If a certain pattern of behavior is to exist, something must be said to reinforce it. Small contributions that supported team processes should be recognized as well as any major accomplishments that have boosted the team's outcomes. Comments such as "Thanks for always coming prepared to team meetings! (pg. 1)" and "I appreciate your sunny disposition! (pg. 1)" are the types of comments that are useful and reinforcing (Huszczko, 1996, pg. 1).

If team leaders desire that people behave in a certain way, and they do perform as desired, they need to be praised and rewarded. If they don't perform as desired, they need to be either redirected or reprimanded. The importance of accountability can't be understated. Reward systems can either help or hamper good teamwork. Consider how to align performance rewards to a team-based environment. One may wish to acknowledge both the team and individuals within it. Ask team members for their ideas – some teams decide such matters for themselves (Mendzela, Sep 1997, pg. 62).

Minimize competitive or individual performance focus as much as possible and reward people for learning new skills. A move to a pay system that rewards for skills or knowledge contributed to the group from a tenure/grade-based system can focus employees on contributing to the team as a unit. Focus on team performance and team rewards to tie peoples' fates together.

For example, establish special bonus pools for cost improvements, asset quality ratings, or customer satisfaction improvements attained by the team. The team would split the pool equally (Cross, Spring 1997, pg. 43).

Effective teams are highly valued and are rewarded principally through non-monetary rewards. Mr. Douglas Shaw (1995) surveys reports these findings:

Only 24 percent of our respondent companies provide financial rewards to teams, with just over a third of those participants reporting highly successful experiences with teams offering team financial incentives and only 13 percent of the marginally successful paying such rewards. When financial rewards are used, however, 59 percent provide the same award to all team members. A wide variety of non-financial rewards are provided, and, as noted above highly valued by team members. Public recognition – through, for example, mentions in newsletters or meetings – is the most common form of reward, provided by 87 percent of companies participating in the survey. (pg. 39)

Sometimes, however, the reward focuses concern on the “slackers” who receive the same reward but didn’t really contribute equitably toward the goal. Team based reward systems can encourage competition between groups, which can lead to less cooperative behavior and can hurt the overall organization. Anytime an award is based on a judgment of which teams are doing “better” than other teams, as opposed to providing the allowance that all teams that exceed their goals gain some reward or recognition, someone is going to feel resentful. Therefore, management must learn not to play one team against another if it hopes to have long-term and widespread

success with group-based organizational development interventions. Teams should compete against targets, not each other (Huszczo, 1996, pg. 1).

Antrim (May 1998) suggests a technique to reward team's achievements by giving to each team bonuses based on how much profit the team have contributed to exceed the organization's annual goal. He advises the following guidelines in designing and implementing an agency-wide, goal focused incentive program:

- 1) Keep it simple. Start with only one or two goals. Set the goals in categories that mean the most to the agency, such as revenues, retention, and profit. Then define a simple method for calculating incentive awards to be paid if the goal is exceeded. Make it easy for people to calculate at any time what they will receive if they exceed the goals.
- 2) Set reachable goals. Set goals that are achievable, but with extra effort. Look at how actual results have changed over the past few years, and estimate what percentage increase over the least year's results would be reasonable. Involve others in the goal setting; get opinions from team members whose efforts will impact the goal directly on what they achieve in the New Year (with extra effort).
- 3) Make rewards worthwhile. Remember that people work for money and for satisfaction (in that order). Bonuses have to be big enough to get and keep staff members' attention and motivation. To maximize the potential reward, some agencies are reducing, or even eliminating, "merit" salary increases. They are linking a staff member's total compensation more closely to agency goal achievement, as well as to personal performance.
- 4) Communicate results frequently. The purpose of goals and rewards is to motivate staff members to achieve or surpass the goals, and to generate the extra effort necessary

when they are falling behind. But this works only if team members know how they are doing, whether they are winning or losing. So, frequent feedback of results is critical. Goal-focused agents meet with their staff at least once each month. They review results, celebrate successes, and discuss issues and priorities for the coming month. When results are disappointing, these meetings are used to develop corrective strategies and renew commitment to achieving the goals.

- 5) Celebrate successes. For example, consider the way that soccer or hockey team members celebrate every time they score a goal. Celebrating little successes maintains enthusiasm and motivation to win, and is critical to achieving the big goals. Call everyone together for a few minutes to announce a major new client and/or sale. Look for other opportunities to congratulate your people, and make them feel good about the progress they are making. And occasionally have a team celebration, a pizza party or other event for no other reason than to reinforce pride in the team, and in each of its members. (Antrim, May 1998, pg. 82)

III.2. Organization and individual goals

The establishment of a goal is one of the most important processes an individual team should perform. It gives the team a sense of direction, and brings the individual members together for a common purpose. The goal gives the team a reference point. They can measure their progress and their success based on where they are in relation to reaching the goal. In a team setting, the goals of both the team and the individual exist, and the group goals must be relevant to the individual goals of the members. Team members usually try to achieve both individual and team goals. The degree to which they can accomplish both of these goals has an effect on the success of the team (Hendrix, 1996, pg. 1).

The make-up of individual team members will have a tremendous influence on the goals established by the team. Zander (1974) developed a model to explain this relationship. He said that most managers consider an employee to be a “self-centered striver”, and his interest lies principally in taking care of himself. When an individual has the opportunity to set goals for himself, his decision depends on two opposing emotions – his need for achievement or his fear of failing. Basically, the two opposing emotions work like this: people with strong motives for success tend to choose goals that are challenging. The goals are not so easy as to make success certain, since that would not be much of a challenge, nor so difficult as to make failure certain. People with strong motives to avoid failing tend to choose goals at extremes of difficulty – either so easy that they will be assured of success, or so difficult that they can say there was never a chance of success anyway.

Probably the most important function of a goal is that it directs and motivates the team. To create an effective team, set a big goal that excites people. Lack of goals produces unnecessary frustrations for the team and individual members. Without a common goal, each team member will attempt to accomplish individual goals in order to fulfill a need for personal satisfaction, since there is no other guidance. Hendrix (1996) describes in his report characteristics of teams without goals, a) highly stressed – competition is high and individual achievement is all-important, b) error prone - everyone tries harder and rushes faster, only to start again. Everyone is increasingly frustrated, c) non-cooperative – helping someone else means they might get ahead. Everyone else is the enemy.

The team goal must be consistent, reasonable and supported by the corporate and business strategic unit goals. Team’s goals must support the goals of executives and managers, and managers must ensure that the goals of the team are the same as corporate goals. An environment

that encourages teams to take changes and set high goals will develop successful teams. Team goals should be concise, clear and feasible to be measured in order to allow verification of their development. Further evaluation of goals targeted is vital for improvement and continues the process in achieving desired organizational goals. Fisher (1993) suggests several considerations that should be kept in mind during individual team goal establishment:

- Meet customer needs. Their needs drive our actions.
- Work should create wealth for customers, stakeholders, and employees.
- Balance short-term business needs with long-term business strategy.
- Everyone is a business partner.
- Eliminate artificial barriers so that each individual can make their maximum contribution.
- Take courageous actions.
- Add value and eliminate waste.
- Keep things simple and use common sense.
- Be antibureaucratic. Manage systems, policies, and methods and don't be managed by them.
- Remain quick, flexible, and responsive.

The process of developing a new framework of directions and goals in a business requires assessing current business processes and comparing them to customer needs and best practice research. It also involves looking at structural misalignments and culture issues to identify gaps between needs and current capabilities. Then, estimate the potential benefits, prioritize the opportunities and develop an appropriate approach plan. Assemble, train, and manage Transformation Teams to complete necessary redesigns that will achieve an organization's goals

and develop an initial communication plan. Keep members of the firm up to date on the details of the plan, the reasons for the transformation and the goals and objectives (Natale, Jul 1998, pg. 23).

III.3. Motivation

Motivation is the strength that makes people move forward. There is no point in a maintenance team approach if the people involved with the organization are not motivated with their jobs. Employees with low morale may present signs of absenteeism, employee turnover, slowdowns, and wildcat strikes. Burnout is evidenced in low morale, fatigue, low productivity, sense of futility, and lack of accomplishment. To prevent such undesirable effects, managers should inspire workers by showing appreciation for their efforts and by trying to make them more motivated. Employees want to be appreciated, treated sympathetically, and feel like part of a team. Organizations should recognize their internal customers as their main resource for enduring competitive advantage, not only for their intangible potential, but also in the matter that technology and manufactory are products that can be copied straightforwardly but people cannot.

Managers could improve employees' motivation about their jobs in several ways. The best way to motivate each employee may differ depending on each employee's needs and values. For some employees, satisfying their basic needs may not be a motivator. These employees might see the fulfillment of basic needs as a minimal requirements to develop their jobs and not as a fulfillment of a higher level of needs such as esteem and self-actualization. Esteem might be fulfilled by recognition for achievement and respect from others, and self-actualization by accomplishment, opportunities for advancement, growth, and creativity. These needs are sources of strong motivational factors. Therefore, for those people, organizations should seek to satisfy their needs by offering challenging and creative work assignments and opportunities for

advancement based on their individual merit. Therefore, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and growth potential should be evaluated for each person on a case-by-case basis.

Basic needs are considered as maintenance factors that may prevent workers from dissatisfaction. However, while the employees may not complain about them, if they are absent, these basic needs are likely to function as dissatisfiers. The basic needs most important to be fulfilled in the employees' work environment are salary, working conditions, and job security. Although, the best way that should be applied to motivate each employee may differ depending on each employee's needs and values.

The process of offering participation to employees in the organization's results has proven effective in making employees feel like business owners and making them act as if they were. Actually, research has shown that when employees become stockholders, they start coming up with ways to save money and improve productivity more than ever. When employees achieve such behavior, they become empowered to make decisions that are best for the customer and for the business.

Although there are some techniques to increase employee's motivation, the degree of motivational potential of any specific job is dramatically influenced by how a person views the job he or she is given, including how assignments are organized structured, and managed. Even in high-pressure situations, professionals report that work is exciting while they are having fun doing it. In some sense, then, highly motivating work assignments should be similar to the kinds of activities people might choose to do for fun on their own.

If work is to be viewed in the same vein as having fun, the tasks should have some of the same characteristics. People are more motivated when they feel their jobs require them to use a wide variety of skills and abilities. Professionals want not only to use their expertise and

knowledge, but also to take on assignments that let them grow and develop and learn new skills. Research shows that the broader the range of skills and abilities tapped early in a person's career, the more likely it is the person will become a better performer later on. Work assignments are more motivating when people are given a complete picture of the project and feel as if they are real members of a project team. Most professionals display motivational problems at work when the tasks they are assigned appear to have little significance. The key is not how many different task individuals are asked to perform, but whether they are able to develop the knowledge, perspective, and credibility essential for sustained success.

Another task characteristic that is key to getting higher levels of motivation is autonomy – the degree of freedom a person has in carrying out work requirements. As autonomy increases, individuals tend to become more reliant on their own efforts, initiatives, and decisions. They begin to feel more personal responsibility and are willing to accept more personal accountability for outcomes of their work. However, the degree of autonomy should be clarified within well-defined boundaries before an employee take initiative and goes in directions that may not be in the interest of the organization. Therefore, managers need to clarify expectations and conditions as much as possible; then give people the freedom to function within those constraints. Once employees are clear about their expectations and directions, they can make the everyday decisions that would let them carry out their work in a more timely and effective manner.

Besides freedom, a balance involving skills and challenge also drives motivation. If a person possesses high levels of skills but low levels of challenge, they may get bored. On the other hand, if a person receives high levels of challenge but he or she does not possess compatible level of skills to perform such challenge, they may get very anxiety but the activity may not flow

properly. Therefore, whenever someone is performing a job that brings compatible attractive challenge with that person, a growing natural flow of the activity may happen.

Furthermore, to sustain motivation, individuals also need to see the results of their work. If professionals cannot determine whether they are performing well or poorly, they have no basis for trying to improve. So another motivating task characteristic is feedback – the degree to which workers receive clear evaluations of their performance (Katz, Sep 1998, pg. 297).

III.4. Managing conflicts

When a team works well together, members can concentrate on their primary goals of solving problems or improving processes. However, when there are unsolved conflicts between team members, the team outcomes might be poorly rated. They might spend a lot of time struggling for agreement on endless discussions that might lead nowhere.

Conflicts should not be avoided but managed. Conflicts must be dealt with and learned from. Whenever there are unsolved conflicts going on with team members, it is important to let the issues emerge. Then, after the people in conflict calm down, they might be able to see each other's perspectives better. When team members can discuss their differences in calm and rational ways, they will have an easier time clarifying mutually acceptable outcomes. Disagreements are natural, and in fact, debate and discussion should be encouraged. A team made up only of 'yes men' can make disastrous decisions that few people honestly agree with in the first place.

According to Katzenbach and Smith (1994), performance, not chemistry, shapes teams. "Real" teams emerge when the individuals in them take risks involving conflict, trust, interdependence and hard work. Making conflict constructive by developing ways to handle differences and concerns and molding them into common goals is when real teams emerge. As Johnson (Dec 1998) states in his article: "conflict can foster the growth of the organization and its

people; encourage personnel to examine procedures that may no longer be optimal; and stimulate creativity and problem-solving. (pg. 54)”

Conflict is a fact of organizational life. The key is to identify critical issues and manage their discussion. Even then, conflict will not go away. But the act of listening will lessen its destructive impact. Lauer (1994) gives the following advice to deal with conflicts whenever they occur at the following distinctive sources of organizational conflicts:

- 1) Not being heard. The biggest reason that conflict intensifies in today’s organizations is the feeling that “no one cares what I think.” The solution is to create a forum for active listening. Quality teams are the perfect answer. Here, people are given undivided attention and feedback about their ideas. Once they feel they have been heard, employees will usually go along with decisions. They just want a chance to have input – to say what they think and have the opinion respected.
- 2) Honest disagreement. The way to control disagreements is to frame ground rules for constructive discussion. Again, the best approach is to give people time in a team meeting to present their opinions one at a time. After someone expresses an opinion, other team members may ask questions. After all sides are heard, the group reaches a consensus on what to do. There are no losers, because all sides are respected and rewarded for their role in clarifying the problem. Usually, some elements of all sides influence the solution.
- 3) Competitive attitude. People with a competitive attitude sometimes generate hostility around them. Team members will resent “me-first” behavior. People with such an attitude may need to learn to channel their energy for the good of the team. The solution is a candid conversation between employee and supervisor. Each party should

analyze the working relationship and propose ways to strengthen it. The supervisor can help the employee understand how to show leadership without acting self-centered. The challenge is to direct the competitive attitude to the benefit of the work team.

- 4) Personality conflict. Personality clashes are the most difficult conflicts to manage. You (or a supervisor or outside consultant) need to sit down with the people in conflict. Explain that they are affecting work group productivity, and ask them to stop acting out their problems with each other. This discussion will usually diminish the hostility. If not, you will need to schedule regular interviews to monitor progress and talk about work alternatives – including firing, if necessary. If firing becomes the only solution, remember that it's for the best. If unchecked, personality conflicts always destroy the productivity of groups.

Anyone who has ever been part of a team knows how easy it is to experience problems that can rob it of productivity. When teams are formed, there is a strong tendency to put on rose – colored glasses and focus on all the benefits. Too often there is no recognition that most teams will experience some interpersonal friction, not to mention other roadblocks. When problems do occur, team leaders are often caught off guard. And this lack of preparation leads team leaders to ignore problems. What might have been a simple issue to resolve had it been dealt with early on, soon turns into a major stumbling block. This is both unfortunate and unnecessary since implementing preventative measures early in the life of the team can avert most team conflicts. Although maintenance schedules should be built to suit unique needs, eight general strategies are offered to prevent team conflicts:

- 1) Conduct a comprehensive team launch. Avoid the temptation to plunge directly into the team's task at the first meeting without properly launching the team. A proper team

launch includes such important activities as member introductions, creation of a common team goal, development of specific objectives, creation of team norms, clarification of empowerment levels, creation of a skills profile, identification of customers, products, and services, and development of a communications plan. Omitting this important step is like asking for trouble. Without a strong foundation, a team is prone to ongoing confusion and constant backtracking to clarify all the things that should have been discussed during the launch.

- 2) Provide training. Being on a team requires a whole new set of skills for both the members and leader. Launching into teamwork at least a few days of training is a sure formula for ineffectiveness. Teams need an understanding of the team concept, the stages of team development and empowerment, and skills in facilitation; meeting management; conflict management; decision making; and (very important) effective team behaviors. Teams also need to know how to use quality tools such as forcefield analysis, cause-and-effect analysis, and systematic problem solving.
- 3) Create and use your team's norms. Always make sure every team develops and actively uses its own set of rules of conduct. Team norms are an important tool for managing member behaviors. They should be written up on a large flipchart sheet and posted in the room whenever the team is meeting. Posting the rules empowers members to call each other on poor behavior. The active use of norms is the first and most important tool for setting a positive climate.
- 4) Anticipate storming. Another key strategy that helps minimize team conflict is to educate members about the stages of team development, so that everyone knows the signs and understands that the symptoms on the stage they are passing through is quite

normal. However, if there are some “symptoms” that are annoying some team members, the group should engage into a discussion to build consensus about preventive strategies to deal with those conflicts. This discussion not only creates an awareness but also encourages members to buy into the idea of dealing with problems as soon as they crop up. Therefore, team members should make a special effort to catch conflicts early and deal with them fairly. This discussion is also tremendously empowering and helps the team members feel that they have some control over how well team functions.

- 5) Identify team problems. Instead of waiting for problems to become huge, it's best to identify blocks to high performance early in the life of a new team. Even if your team can only work on one problem at that time, it's better than ignoring issues until they become major stumbling blocks that may impede the team to move forward.
- 6) Use peer feedback. Every team needs to have a system where members can regularly give each other feedback about interpersonal things that are getting in the way of their work performance. Regardless of which methods are used, constructive feedback always brings insightful information about others' opinion on how you could do things even more effectively.
- 7) Monitor team and meeting effectiveness. Every team needs to conduct a team effectiveness survey every six to eight weeks, whether or not the team shows signs of serious trouble. The open and objective discussion that survey results generate will encourage your team to identify weaknesses and propose solutions to overcome them.

- 8) Implement leader feedback. The best way of avoiding power struggles and adjusting relationships as the team develops is to hold regular checkups of the leader-member relationship. (Bens, Jul/Aug 1999, pg. 45-47)

IV. Benefits of using teams

Teams can be an efficient way to organize work. The potential benefits are immense. Teamwork can break down departmental barriers, provide developmental challenges, free up management, and improve customer service (Mendzela, Sept 1997, pg. 62).

Whether organizations incorporate teams in their methodology to solve problems or to create changes, teams are more likely to reach outcomes than one person alone. This is true in one sense because people involved in teams don't have to go through different bureaucratic layers of the organization hierarchy to make decisions. A team can bring differing viewpoints and a variety of skills, improve the quality of decisions, and helps widen the acceptance of change (Aslinger, May/Jun 1998, pg. 42).

On the longer term, effective teams may help the organization to, solve problems quicker than a person would solve only by himself, improve customer responsiveness, and implement long-term strategies.

Team development has been seen as a means of improving organizational effectiveness in an increasingly competitive world, as well as a powerful way of promoting empowerment, innovation and learning. Teams can be the principal learning unit in a learning organization. Recent studies indicate that substantive participation in the form of self-directed work teams has clear benefits. Worker autonomy enhances worker attitudes, behaviors, and performance (McBain, Winter 1997, pg. 20).

Team learning is the process by which teams benefit from the richness of individual perspectives building a shared vision that may bring the alignment of each organization member into a common direction or vision.

V. Risks of using teams

Although, the outcomes of the benefits might surpass the risks involved in building teams, organizations should be aware of unexpected results that could produce negative outcomes. The awareness of risks involved in developing teams may help to eliminate or at least to reduce the potential of negative outcomes. It is wise to prevent problems before they happen. Therefore, organizations should acknowledge the potential risks during ventures, because once the organization recognizes them, they can better prepare themselves to learn from those risks, and take steps to diminish or even to eliminate them.

Teams are like meetings; they can be productive, effective, and energizing – or they can be a waste of time, sluggish, and a drain on valuable resources (Aslinger, May/Jun 1998, pg. 42). The following potential risks could occur in an organization; an increase employee's personal conflict, wasting individuals' time, and misdirecting the organization's goals. Over time, teams can intensify progress towards effectiveness or disband.

Moving to a team structure is not an easy task. So, management should consider a number of issues to decide if the transition is worth the effort before sponsoring it. Putting a group of people into a common area and calling them a team does not create a team. Although teams are independent, they can not function without support from the whole organization. Team members must take on and be trained for new responsibilities to solve problems. A team is only as efficient as its ability to share all data and opinions and then decide on a plan to solve a problem. Team members must learn and practice the skills of active listening, inquiry, and advocacy. Team

members need to learn about different functions, to find a common working approach, and to negotiate their methods of shared decision-making. People will always feel nervous putting their careers, compensation, and ideas into the hands of others. Training, ground rules for resolving differences, and informal peer evaluation can help, but the process takes time. The transitions to skill development teams and broaden effectiveness also takes time. Management is not always able or willing to take the time to establish skill development teams (Cross, Spring 1997, pg. 43).

VI. Why teams fail?

Building an efficient team may require a long period of dedication from the people involved. There are many occasions when these people expect quick results after they have made quick fixes. The timing for people in teams to really begin being productive often takes longer than expected. This delay happens mainly because the team is “disconnected”, they do not produce many positive results. This difficulty for “connection” occurred primarily because the people the teams needed a great deal of time to build trust and empathy with each other. Trust can often be a casualty of an unwillingness or inability to face up to emotions. Many of people spend a lot of time and effort not trusting themselves or others – protecting, inspecting, doubting, checking and weighing instead of doing work that is creative, collaborative and valuable. In other words, trust is a prerequisite for innovation (Cooper, Apr 2, 1998, pg. 48).

Although those prerequisites are intangibles, they are indicative of achievement whenever teams members have the wish to work on them. Trust and empathy can be improved when team members know each other better and they have the opportunity to share more time together. This process may diminish barriers that may have been created when they first joined. Remember that the task of managing teams is not a one-time event. Team members have to be really committed to

their objectives and be persistent in achieving them. It is essential to create realistic expectations and move at a sustainable pace.

Many companies form teams only to dissolve them at the first setback or sign of trouble. Team-development efforts have been halted because they were too costly, did not provide results quickly enough, or were poorly understood and planned for by line management (Holpp, Apr 1997, pg. 44).

Other factors to enlighten why teams fail are added from considering topics described above. These considerations are based on the assumption that the team has failed in not being effective since they might were not build properly. The team members might were not suitable selected and their tasks might were not clearly defined. On the other hand, the organization might not have been really open and flexible to support the development of teams and given them enough power to implement their outcomes. Yeung (June 1999) points out some common problems developing teams:

- 1) Hidden agendas. A belief that certain members of the team are secretly building their own empires or furthering their own careers rather than working for the good of the organization.
- 2) Lack of understanding. Misconceptions about why the team has been brought together are common when a team is first formed.
- 3) Lack of leadership. The team leader does not have the level of skills required to manage the team effectively. Sometimes, it may be that no one member is recognized as the leader.
- 4) Wrong mix of team members. For example, there are 'creative types' who love to generate ideas but cannot focus on detail, while there are 'doers' who would rather not

contribute to discussions and prefer to be given tasks to do. A team that is unevenly balanced could either generate lots of ideas but fail to implement them, or alternatively, discover that it does not have any ideas to implement.

- 5) Unhealthy team environment. The team is unable to cope under pressure. The biggest pitfall is not having issues raised early enough, 'says Gary Spellins. When you're working to tight deadlines, the earlier you put your hand up with a problem, the better. It's easier to add resources to fix a problem before a deadline than to rectify it after you're missed the deadline. You need to create an environment where there are no surprises.

Another factor that has inhibited the development of teams in some areas, are the multicultural differences that have recently been more noticeable in the US workforce population. According to the 1990 US Census, by 2010 minorities will account for 50% of the US population. Therefore, in order for a team to have a high efficiency level, team members need to understand cultural differences to better cope with each other. Experts say the keys to getting past the cultural differences are to recognize them, talk about them, respect them, and insist on acceptable American professional standards in most areas (Gindin, Sep/Oct 1998, pg. 31).

VII. Learning from others

Do you always try not to fail? If you usually have success, you may not give yourself the opportunity to learn from mistakes. The high rate of success could be causing you to create a certain level of resistance to change and furthermore, you may not be open enough to visit different perspectives. You may have to break some paradigms in order to expand your scope and horizon. Unfortunately, some of the most powerful lessons come from failures. There are times when experiencing negative outcomes is necessary to create an opportunity to learn from mistakes

and to learn how to better prepare for similar situations in the future. Such experiences might not be pleasant when we are passing through them, but we might feel rewarded in the future if we take advantage of learning something that we haven't learned before in other ways.

For example, a mass-market production organization has performed highly in sales but just in one niche. They didn't care about exploring other market segmentation. Although some professionals mentioned the risk of concentrating sales in only a few buyers, this organization didn't take any initiative to research the issue. Instead, they concentrated their efforts solely on how to enhance sales in that niche. But, due to an unpredictable change in the market, they suddenly began to sell nothing. In that moment, they thought that they didn't have enough flexibility to target new niches in a short run and be efficient enough to compete. Overtime, due to their high efficiency they survived after finding new ways to perform that they had never thought of before.

There are a lot of mistakes that one doesn't necessarily need to experience in order to learn. A large range of mistakes can be prevented or overcome by discussing mistakes and solutions with people who have already experienced these problems. Businesses need to think more universally rather than sticking to a narrow focus. Further, businesses need to listen and be open to learn. It seems very simple, but effective learning may be reached only when one behaves as a proactive listener. The following questions are guidelines for learning from mistakes: How many times have you made the same mistake? Why has such behavior occurred gain? Have you tried to find a different way of doing things in order to avoid a similar problem in happening again? Have you tried anything innovative or unusual that you have never done before? Have you listened to others' opinions? If you really want to change your behavior, you should be able to respond to such questions. The open discussion of premises and theories of action emerges as the key

difference between teams that learn and adopt new behaviors and those that resist learning, resist change, and repeatedly make the same mistakes.

With the rapid speed of change and time restraints, benchmarking teams becomes a valuable tool to learn and build from the experiences of others. Benchmarking, when done well, can help leaders to understand what has worked well for others and to adapt solutions for their situations. There is a proverb that says, “Learn from the mistakes of others because you may not live long enough to make them all yourself”.

There are several factors that influence the generation of effective teams. In order to facilitate the identification of such factors, this project inspects what is behind from the facts when organizations go through the process of building, developing and managing teams. Frequently, such factors are passed through without notice and teams do not realize why they are not being effective. However, once at least, since some factors are acknowledge, teams may have greater chances of being really effective. There are several techniques that can be learned and practiced. As a general rule, what is the most important for a team being effective, is to the individuals involved with teams have the willingness of being open enough for changes in their way of interacting with people and how much they truly value other’s team member’s contribution.

The following three chapters of this project describe the methodology used to gather data, how this data were organized, disclose and analyzes of findings from interviews, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

This study used both secondary and primary research; secondary in determining the characteristics; primary, in interviews to verify if there is consensus about whether or not those characteristics are associated with effective teams.

To this point the study has identified the characteristics of effective teams. They share a significant amount of common characteristics. The characteristics to this point have been drawn from a search of the literature and their performance. Now that these characteristics are identified, interviews will occur with those who participated on teams to determine whether those characteristics are indeed associated with effective teams.

THE ROLL OUT PLAN

This qualitative study investigated the characteristics that exist in an effective teams in organizations today, how their organizational design impacts team development and the different ways that people learn, think about and understand teams in organizations. It involved researching how teams in these organizations had been built, developed and managed.

When investigating how teams have been built, this study focused on the following questions: what criteria were being used to select team members, how team members are functioning within their roles, how the team tasks were developed, how team members feel supported by the team, what has been done to improve communication effectiveness, what

organization measurements should be done to evaluate a team's performance, why a certain team is not motivated to work as a team, why organizations should worry about individual moral and self-esteem, what you can do to motivate teams to achieve more positive results, why a certain team is in conflict most of the time, what organizations are gaining from working with teams, and what the potential risks involved in sponsoring teams could be.

When covering the developing topic, this study illustrated the stages of team development, characteristics of effective teams, and characteristics of ineffective teams.

And finally, this study went in more detail to illustrate what organizations have done to manage teams for a long and successful run. This study addressed the organization's maintenance approach as a means to increase team's effectiveness including: training, establishment of performance measurement, and programs for recognition of effective teams. In order for such analyses, this study evaluated individual and organizational goals, motivation, and conflict management.

In addition to assessing the benefits of using teams, this study elucidate the major risks that organizations could confront whenever teams are in charge in addition to determining why teams fail. And as a lesson of life, this study drawn insights about learning from others when teams are in place.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

INTERVIEWS

Interviews were accomplished with businesses in Ithaca and Rochester, NY. These businesses were quality pre-selected by the researcher and the director of the School of Hospitality & Service Management at RIT, Dr. Jim Jacobs. The interviews were recorded for later analyzes.

The purpose of the interviews were to verify what people involved with teams thought about the factors that generate effective teams. Subsequently, the purpose was to compare these findings to other authors' views.

FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Appendix A lists the demographics of six companies that make use of teams. For privacy reasons, interviewees and company names are not revealed. However, a description of their type of business is disclosed, along with the location, orientation for profit, and number of employees. A separate case number was assigned for reference in the analysis of the data. A summary of findings is presented below.

In case (1) teams were initially utilized in 1996, but were not productive and disbanded. Most team members were task oriented and the general manager was not involved. The team was not cohesive and conflict between team members was predominant at their meetings.

In February, 2000, the general manager advised the management staff that they should create further teams. He instructed the group to meet whenever they felt it necessary and to decide

their tasks by themselves. This flexibility and freedom to work on issues of their choice definitely contributed to building a team whose members were valued and felt more motivated. In the beginning a group of seven volunteers was formed and started with one-hour weekly meetings. However, after three months the team was still not reaching productive results. For that reason, they decided to hire a management team company to help them solve conflicts and to learn about how to work more productively. They had two meetings with the management team company, but it made a world of difference. The interviewee declared that it was a crucial motivational input for them in order to begin working constructively. Since then, the team members began to consider their voices with the same weight and to learn and value other member's opinion.

Accordingly to the literature review, building a team that achieves high level of productivity may require a longer period of dedication than the period frame that the team might be willing to allow. The timing for the storming stage varies depending on each teams capabilities. Therefore, the team in the case (1) should not give up in the beginning. They should try to interact with each other in a different ways until they begin to be productive. According to Katz (1998), the initiative of the general manager in encouraging the team to work on issues of their preference was properly established. This freedom to select topics of their choice, motivate the team in working more reliant on their own efforts, initiatives, and decisions. They may feel more personally responsibility for outcomes of their work. The external input from the management consultant represented a trigger for that team pushing them in the right direction to bring cohesion within the team members.

In case (2) the organization built multiple teams to accomplish the orders for that day. The teams depend on the number of orders and the person's willingness to work on a particular team. Each team leader establishes a goal to be achieved during the production progress. If the goal is

achieved they receive a pre-established award such as a longer break. Based on the performance of the day, teams are scored and compared with goals established. When the organization accumulates a certain level of reward they split equally with all full-time employees. Every team has a leader and every member of the team has the chance of becoming the leader if they are willing and if approved by the group. Each member within the team has the sense of cohesion, collaboration and commitment. They see themselves as individuals creating an unified team that has a common goal in mind. They used to say that they perform as a “We” team, instead of “I” team, which would be highly distinguished by individual achievements regarding their successes or failures, and not as group accomplishments.

The organizational chart is very flat and employees feel that their opinions are being considered in such way that they feel they are participating in organizational progress. All employees receive an annual share of the company’s financial results. The company has the philosophy to engage all employees in teams to work with problem solving related with the team’s task. A interviewee declared that he felt fulfilled and very satisfied with his job because the company cares and he has the opportunity to learn and grown. The company involves people from the production line in their operational decisions with the expectation that they will get involved and better understand the organization difficulties. The hope is that everyone will be more committed to overcome operational problems.

Becoming self-managed is an aspiration in the process of building teams that not always is achieved. So, congratulations for the team case (2)! Accordingly with Huszczo (1996), behaviors that are not recognized become extinguished. Therefore, the reward programs that the organization sponsors are essential to reinforce the team effectiveness. The assumption that every one in a team can become the team leader gives to the team a large sense of equality while

allowing the team to become more independent and encouraging team members to take on more responsibilities. The dynamic of a “We” team is a surplus for the team to build connectivity and commitment. Working as a team, each person feels pride in being a member of the team. Flatter organizations force the decision-making process downward to all levels of employees and may bring more commitment to the organization.

In case (3) the interviewee had previous experience working with a non-profit organization that had a substantial number of volunteers in their work force. Although, volunteer retention in the organization averaged a week, teams were developed to build more commitment to accomplish the tasks proposed. Due to the high turnover encountered in this organization, time was a major concern while building teams. Therefore, to speed up the introduction of new numbers to the team, the interviewee opted to train new members individually to build up their confidence before incorporating that person to the team.

There was a special focus on each individual’s strengths considering that each person has their own potential to develop. As a result, team members felt that they were key components of the operation and that the time they were investing was worthwhile. As a team leader, the interviewee suggests that her role was to teach others to value themselves. This process allowed people to express themselves, identified the gifts they possessed and the skills they could use to contribute. The interviewee found that the outcome of the teamwork in this organization was greater productivity, better morale, and greater satisfaction of staff and volunteers with their jobs.

Although, the training process of new team members can happen differently, the interviewee found a very reasonable way to speed up and smooth the process of introducing new team members to the team. The individual recognition of each persons’ strengths is an example

that demonstrates how much they are cared and valued. This definitely contributes to each individual's motivation and builds quality and stronger customer focus.

In case (4) the effectiveness of teamwork is achieved when employees began to see themselves as equal. According to the interviewee there is no person in the operation who has more power than anyone else. Employees view themselves as part of the team, and are treated with respect and dignity. After a 90 days training period the employee is effectively part of the team and there is no task that he or she cannot perform in the operation. They are a powerful small group of people who are 100% committed to the spirit of teams. Although, the organization had a formal organizational chart, they share their voice and balance respect and rights. Their work environment is a blend of knowledge, creativity and fun.

Before implementing such philosophy in their organization, employees used to be terrified when their boss showed up. Today, they feel glad when the boss shows up at their store. Before, employees didn't feel much passion at work, but today they feel as though their workplace is an extension of their home. Recently, they developed beneficial programs for the community as a means of building awareness of their brand name and inviting more people to join the store.

The feeling of empowerment by team members leads them to believe that their voice is heard and respected. Consequently, this may encourage them to take on more responsibilities and feel more committed with their job.

In case (5) the manager's philosophy about team building was very important during the process when teams were being formed. However, once the teams were formed they achieved their best performance by themselves with minimum interference of the manager. The organization performs a team building exercise with new members to speed up integration to the current staff and to introduce how the team building spirit is carried out in the company.

Employees in this operation have autonomy and feel free to make mistakes. In this operation there is no financial reward for specific achievements. On the other hand, they promote a pizza party to celebrate team achievements and nominate an employee of the month who has their picture displayed on a wall along with the recognition of peers and staff. The biggest motivational factor found in this operation was employees being recognized by their achievements and having an exciting working environment.

With traditional structures, it might be very difficult for a group of people to decide by themselves and use the power to build teams in the organization. Therefore, the initial support and orientation from someone that has influenced the development of teams would be vital. However, after a team is created and begins to perform, leaders should not do the thinking and problem-solving for themselves, but teach them to think at work. At the same time, according with Joinson (1999), the pattern of leaders working in teams might be a sample for the team members to follow.

Giving to the employees the autonomy to make mistakes is an indication that the organization really promotes innovation. It requires experimentation. Accordingly, Shaw (1995) reports that only 24 percent from the teams surveyed provided financial rewards to teams achievements and from those, only a third were successful. What Shaw found was that public recognition was the most common reward. Antrim (May 1998) complements that saying to maximize the potential reward, some agencies are reducing, or even eliminating, “merit” salary increases.

Case (6) shares the principle that it is fundamental for any team to have a leader in order to make directions clear. What motivates the employees is the fact that they do not have a routine job. There is always change on going because of technology innovations and introduction of different ways to serve customers. This motivation of introducing different approaches comes

from flexibility, influence, and authority to change the way they perform their jobs. The interviewee believes that some teams fail because those teams members were not sincere enough with each other, building artificial situations that generate artificial outcomes.

The leaders responsibility on a team is to promote connectivity, motivation and establish commitment at all levels. Successful leaders are models who coach, provide support and encourage members to take on more responsibilities. Therefore, part of the leadership role is to allow teams to become more independent without the strong need of depending on a leader to give them directions or explain where they should go.

The research indicated that the most common satisfiers are the following: having fun at work and developing non-routine activities where employees may feel they are being challenged and have to use their expertise. In order to increase employee morale it was found that managers could grant workers more responsibility for their jobs, let workers share rewards of the enterprise, and ensure that employees have their rights met

The following characteristics in team members were found from interviews. Team members should have: excellent communication talent, interpersonal ability to connect easily with people and show their initiative, expertise in problem solving, knowledge in several areas, sharpness for conflict management solutions, a nurturing leadership, sense of humor, patience, endurance, flexibility, responsibility, creativity, openness to learning, commitment to quality, special caring for planning, and orientation for decision-making implementation.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study reveals factors that influence success and failure in building teams. These factors reveal that effective teams share common characteristics that contribute to team development, which in turn may lead to greater levels of success by enhancing the overall organization's performance, including the development of their products and quality of services offered. Consequently, this process may drive customers to higher levels of satisfaction whenever they are dealing with that organization and as a result, entice customers to increase demand. The organization benefits are based on retaining more customers during longer periods and on the bottom line expanding organization's profits.

When a team works well together, members can concentrate on their primary goals of solving problems or improving processes. However, when there are unresolved conflicts between team members the team outcomes are poorly rated.

The potential of teams is unlimited and it can upgrade the overall performance of an organization. Research has shown that teamwork is a powerful competitive advantage that can enhance efficiency in organizations while increasing their quality, productivity and employee satisfaction. The team-building concept may be implemented in order to speed up and facilitate achievement of organizations objectives. Organizations should always be committed to encouraging their employees to share the team-building concept in order to further success on a long-term basis.

Invest in training, too. The process of building teams can be learned even before a team effectively is created. Actually, the more training team members receive, the more chances of success they might achieve. However, one has to be aware that ineffective training diminishes team effectiveness and escalates costs. Given the growing pressures in reducing cost, businesses organizations can little afford to spend money unwisely on training.

Implement continued efforts to maintain employees who are motivated to encourage new ideas. Every team member must be committed to themselves, to each other, and to the process as a whole to feel the impact. The synergism of combining individuals together to create ideas and solve problems forms the basis for organizations to implement teams. Teams may exceed what one individual can produce alone. Teams have the potential to tap synergy.

Service should be customized as much as possible to give the customer more identification with the service provided. The degree of labor intensity should be kept as low as possible in order to keep costs down and allow the customer to be more involved in the service that he or she is involved with. Service customization may be more effective when customers play an active part in the service system. A customer's participation in the process may contribute to increasing his or her satisfaction. For example, if guests in a hotel feel that they have an active participation in choosing the type of room that they want, they may achieve greater satisfaction with that room rather than someone who was not involved in the process.

Service employees should be able to interact directly with the customer with little intervention from management. Downsizing, empowering and increasing employee participation in decision-making, has contributed to increase employee productivity. As a result, organizations reap the benefits of teamwork when solving problems. Encouraging employees to suggest

solutions and to do their best may improve their self-confidence. It is important for managers to treat their employees as an internal customer that is going to influence the company's reputation.

If an organization really believes and wants to support teams, they must not give up. There are no teams that are alike. Each team has its own strengths and weaknesses. It requires a lot of involvement from the organization leaders, but once the team begins to generate positive outcomes, the organization will recognize that it is worth the investment. Therefore, it is expected that the benefits of effective teams surpass potential risks.

“I’d rather have 1% of the efforts of 100 people, than 100% of the efforts of 1 person.” – Andrew Carnegie.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Antrim, D. (1998, May). How to Get Employees to Commit to Goals. Rough Notes, 141 (5), pp. 81-82.
- Antrim, D. (1999, February). Improvement Teams. Rough Notes, 142 (2), pp. 100-101.
- Aslinger, G., & Whipple, G. (1998, May/June). How to Jump Start Your Task Team. The Journal for Quality and Participation, 21 (3), pp. 42-45.
- Beck, L. (1988, March). Train Today's Workers for Tomorrow's Jobs. Modern Materials Handling, 43 (4), pp. 84.
- Bens, I. (1999, July/August). Keeping your Team out of Trouble. The Journal for Quality and Participation, 22 (4), pp. 45-47.
- Bishop, J. W., & Scott, K. D. (1997, February). How Commitment Affects Team Performance. HR Magazine, 42 (2), pp. 107-111.
- Blanchard Management Report. (1998, February). Team Accountability Needs to be Clear. Manage, 49 (2), pp. 4-5.
- Boone, L. E., & Kurtz, D. L. (1997). Contemporary Business. Forth Worth, TX: The Dryden Press.
- Bragg, T. (1999, May). Turn Around an Ineffective Team. IIE Solutions, 31 (5), pp. 49-51.
- Briggs, R., & Nettles-Lechedo, S. (1998). Principles of Team Building. United Way 16th Annual Conference. United Way of Greater Rochester.
- Chase, N. (1999, August). Learning to Lead a Virtual Team. Quality, 38 (9), pp. 76.

- Conger, J. A. (1998, May/June). The Necessary Art of Persuasion. Harvard Business Review, 76 (3), pp. 84-95.
- Cooper, R. (1998, April 2). Sentimental Value. People management, 4 (7), pp. 48-50.
- Covey, S. (1998, February). Constant Renewal. Executive Excellence, 15 (2), pp. 5-6.
- Cross, R. (1997). Implementing Teams for Commercial Banking. Commercial Lending Review, 12 (2), pp. 43-48.
- Devine, D., Clayton, L., Philips, L., Dunford, B., & Melner, S. (1999, December). Teams in Organizations: Prevalence, Characteristics, and Effectiveness. Small Group Research, 30 (6), pp. 678-711.
- Dolan, E. (2000, June 23). Business Travelers Lament Family Separation. The Ithaca Journal, pp. 7A.
- Drexler, A. B., & Forrester, R. (1998, September). Interdependence: The Crux of Teamwork. HR Magazine, 43 (10), pp. 52-62.
- Dyer, W.G. (1995). Team Building: Current Issues and New Alternatives. (3rd ed.). Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.
- Farren, C. (1999, July). Smart Teams. Executive Excellence, 16 (7), pp. 14-15.
- Fisher, K. (1993). Leading Self-directed Work Teams: A guide to Developing New Team Leadership Skills. McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Gardner, B., & Korth, S. (1998, September/October). A framework for Learning to Work in Teams. Journal of Education for Business, 74 (1), pp. 28-33.
- Gindin, R. (1998, September/October). Dealing with a Multicultural Workforce. Nation's Restaurant News, pp. 31,83.

- Gooderham, G., & La Trobe, J. (1997, October). Measures Must Motivate. CMA, 71 (8), pp. 8.
- Haught, L. (1999, February). Eliminating Barriers to Team Effectiveness. Information Executive, 3 (2), pp. 7.
- Hein, K. (1997, January). Corporate Conscience. Incentive, 171 (1), pp. 30-31.
- Hendrix, G. (1996). The Importance of Goals to the Success of Work Teams. CSWT Reports.
- Hengen, W. K. Jr. (1998, September). Managing Moments of Truth. Management Review, 87 (8), pp. 56-60.
- Higgins, S. E., & Routhieaux, R. L. (1999, June). A Multiple-level Analysis of Hospital Team Effectiveness. The Health Care Supervisor, 17 (4), pp. 1-13.
- Holpp, L. (1997, April). Teams: It's all in the planning. Training & Development, 51 (4), pp. 44-47.
- Houston, M., Parks, K., & Talbott, J. (1997, March). Why Teams Work. The CPA Journal, 67 (3), pp. 55-57.
- Hunsaker, J. R. (1999, May/June). How Technology Improves Team Effectiveness. The Journal for Quality and Participation, 22 (3), pp. 30-33.
- Huszczo, G. E. (1996). Tools for Team Excellence. Davies-Black Publishing.
- Jaycox, M. (1996, March). How to Get Nonbelievers to Participate in Teams. Quality Progress, 29 (3), pp. 45.
- Jassawalla, A., & Sashittal, H. (2000, Winter). Strategies of Effective New Product Team Leaders. California Management Review, 42 (2), pp. 34-51.

- Johnson, G. H., Means, T., & Pullis, J. (1998, December). Managing Conflict. The Internal Auditor, 55 (6), pp. 54-59.
- Joinson, C. (1999, May). Teams at Work. HR Magazine, 44 (5), pp. 30-36.
- Katz, R. (1998, September 14). Motivation Leads to Innovation. Informationweek, 700, pp. 294-297.
- Katzenbach, J. R., & Smith, D. K. (1994). The Wisdom of Teams: Creating the High Performance Organization. Harper Collins Publishers, Inc.
- Lameiras, M. M. (1999, January 18). Strategies for Change. The Atlanta Journal, the Atlanta Constitution.
- Lauer, L. D. (1994, November/December). How to Manage Internal Conflict. Nonprofit World, 12 (6), pp. 46.
- Lawler, E. (1999, September/October). Employee Involvement Makes a Difference. The Journal for Quality and Participation, 22 (5), pp. 18-20.
- Lipnack, J., & Stamps, J. (1999, May). Virtual Teams. Executive Excellence, 16 (5), pp. 14-15.
- Lyles, C. D., & Mosley, A. G. (1997, October/December). Hiring the Best. Business and Economic Review, 44 (1), pp. 19-21.
- Mack, T. (1993, December). Putting Incentive Compensation to Work. Association Management, 45 (12), pp. 38.
- McBain, R., & Kusy, M. (1997). On Team Effectiveness, Team Learning and Learning in Organizations. Henley-on-Thames: Manager Update, 9 (2), pp. 20-31.
- McCormack, M. H. (1994, April). Please, don't shoot! Sales and Marketing Management, 146 (4), pp. 41.

- Menzela, E. (1997, April). Effective Teams. Journal of New Zealand, 76 (3), pp. 12-16.
- Menzela, E. (1997, September). Effective Teams. The CPA Journal, 67 (9), pp. 62-63.
- Natale, J. (1998, July). Change for the Better. Canadian Insurance, 103 (8), pp. 23, 29.
- Recardo, R. (1999, Spring). Conducting a readiness assessment: A foundation for Solid Teamwork. National Productivity Review, 18 (2), pp. 29-34.
- Rieley, J. B. (1993/1994, Winter). The Circular Organization: How Leadership Can Optimize Organizational Effectiveness. National Productivity Review, 13 (1), pp. 11.
- Roberts, E. (1997, June). Team Training: When is enough...enough? The Journal for Quality and Participation, 20 (3), pp. 16-20.
- Ross, J. A. (1997, March/April). Does Friendship Improve Job Performance? Harvard Business Review, 75 (2), pp. 8-9.
- Schmitz, B. (1997, July). Overcoming Cultural Barriers. Computer – Aided Engineering, 16 (7), pp. 6A-7A.
- Scholtes, P.R., Joiner, B.L., & Streibel, B.J. (1996). The Team Handbook. (2nd ed.). Joiner Associates Inc.
- Shaw, D. G., & Scheier, C. E. (1995). Team Measurement and Rewards: How Some Companies are Getting it Right. Human Resource Planning, 18 (3), pp. 34-44.
- Shoop, T. (1994, July). Brave New Leadership. Government Executive, 26 (7), pp. 22.
- Stork, K. (1999, July 15). Five Mistakes that Cause Benchmarking to Fail. Purchasing, 127 (1), pp. 43.
- Vegt, G., Emans, B., & Vliert, E. (1998, June). Motivating Effects of Task and Outcome Interdependence in Work Teams. Group & Organization Management, 23 (2), pp. 124-143.

Vines, L. S. (1997, June). Make Long-term Temporary Workers Part of the Team. HR Magazine, 42 (4), pp. 65-70.

Yeung, R., & Bailey, S. (1999, June). Get it Together. Accountancy, 123 (1270), pp. 40-41.

Zender, A. F. (1974). Productivity and Group Success: Team Spirit vs. the Individual Achiever. Psychology Today, 8, pp. 64-68.

Zigon, J. (1997, January/February). Team Performance Measurement: A process for Creating Team Performance Standards. Compensation and Benefits Review, 29 (1), pp. 38-47.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CASE INTERVIEW DEMOGRAPHICS

	<u>Business</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Profit</u>	<u># Employees</u>
Case (1)	Hospitality	Rochester, NY	Yes	200
Case (2)	Packaging	Rochester, NY	Yes	200
Case (3)	Health Care	Rochester, NY	No	100
Case (4)	F&B Service	Rochester, NY	Yes	10
Case (5)	Foodservice Management Systems	Ithaca, NY	Yes	200
Case (6)	Education	Ithaca, NY	No	500

APPENDIX B: LETTER CONFIRMING THE INTERVIEW

Date

Mr., Ms. Interviewee name

Business name

Address

Dear Mr., Ms.

SUBJECT: RESEARCH STUDY ON THE FACTORS THAT GENERATE EFFECTIVE TEAMS.

I am a student in the Executive Leader Program in Service Management Masters degree at Rochester of Institute of Technology (RIT). The study, to examine team building concepts, should facilitate organizations being more productive. The study includes surveys of relevant literature from books and articles collected from abstracts, periodicals, and journals related to team building, as well as from interviews with business personnel in Ithaca and Rochester, NY.

This study has the purpose to evaluate what makes an effective team in business. Additionally, this study will identify common characteristics in team building and reveal factors that indicate reasons for successes and failures in team building.

I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this endeavor. I will send a copy of this project when it is concluded.

Best Regards,

Alberto V. Lenz Cesar

Cesar@twcnny.rr.com

(607) 266-8955

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDELINE QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) What does make a team being effective?
- 2) How has the activity of building teams been recognized by your organization?
- 3) What has the organization been done to motive employees to be involved with teams?
- 4) Do you believe the teams in your organization achieved a high level of synergy? Why?
- 5) What criteria do you usually use to select team members?
- 6) How were the team tasks developed in your organization?
- 7) Have you ever utilized virtual teams in your organization? Why?
- 8) What characteristics do you distinguish as part of effective teams?
- 9) What characteristics do you identify with ineffective teams?
- 10) Why do you think that some teams eventually fail?
- 11) Did your organization decide to shift from a traditional model to a team-based structure?
Why?
- 12) Did your organization have to adapt the organizational chart to introduce a team-based structure? Why?
- 13) Did your organization have to cut off team-based structure and return to a traditional model structure? Why?
- 14) Do your organization's leaders continually support team building?
- 15) Do team members feel supported by the team?

- 16) Do team members feel supported by the organization?
- 17) What attributes do you consider preferable for team members to have?
- 18) What is an average size of teams in your organization?
- 19) How do team members usually function in their roles in the team? Do they usually rotate positions as sponsor, stakeholder, and steering committee?
- 20) What types of teams are there in your organization?
- 21) What assignments are given to these teams to solve?
- 22) Do you believe the teams in your organization achieved a high level of commitment? Why?
- 23) What has been done to improve communication effectiveness in your organization?
- 24) Do team members in your organization have a significant level of connectivity between them? Why?
- 25) Are you satisfied with the results of working with virtual teams in your organization?
- 26) In which stage do you consider that your organization teams are located?
 - a) Form
 - b) Storm
 - c) Norm
 - d) Perform
 - e) Adjourn
- 27) Do the team members in your organization acknowledge such stages of development?
- 28) What has your organization been doing to manage teams for a long and successful run?
- 29) How often are teams building activities conducted in your organization?
- 30) What have team members done to enhance interdependence in your organization?

- 31) How much training have team members received to improve their performance in your organization?
- 32) How much training have team members received and how has it contributed to their performance in your organization?
- 33) Are there established performance measurements about teams' accomplishments in your organization? What is done with this information?
- 34) Are there established programs for recognition of effective teams in your organization? How do they work?
- 35) Does your organization perform individual evaluation?
- 36) Is there a match between individual goals and the organizational goals?
- 37) Have you done something to increase employees' morale and self-esteem in your organization? What? Why not?
- 38) What has done the most to motivate your employees to increase effectiveness?
- 39) Has something been done to encourage employees to come up with new ways to increase productivity in your organization? What? Why not?
- 40) How are conflicts between team members usually managed in your organization?
- 41) What potential benefits do you expect teams to bring to your business?
- 42) Have you considered the potential risks by nurturing teams? Why?
- 43) What might be the potential major risks that team building could bring into your business?
- 44) How would you rate the success of using teams in your organization?
- a) Unsuccessful
 - b) Fairly successful
 - c) Highly successful